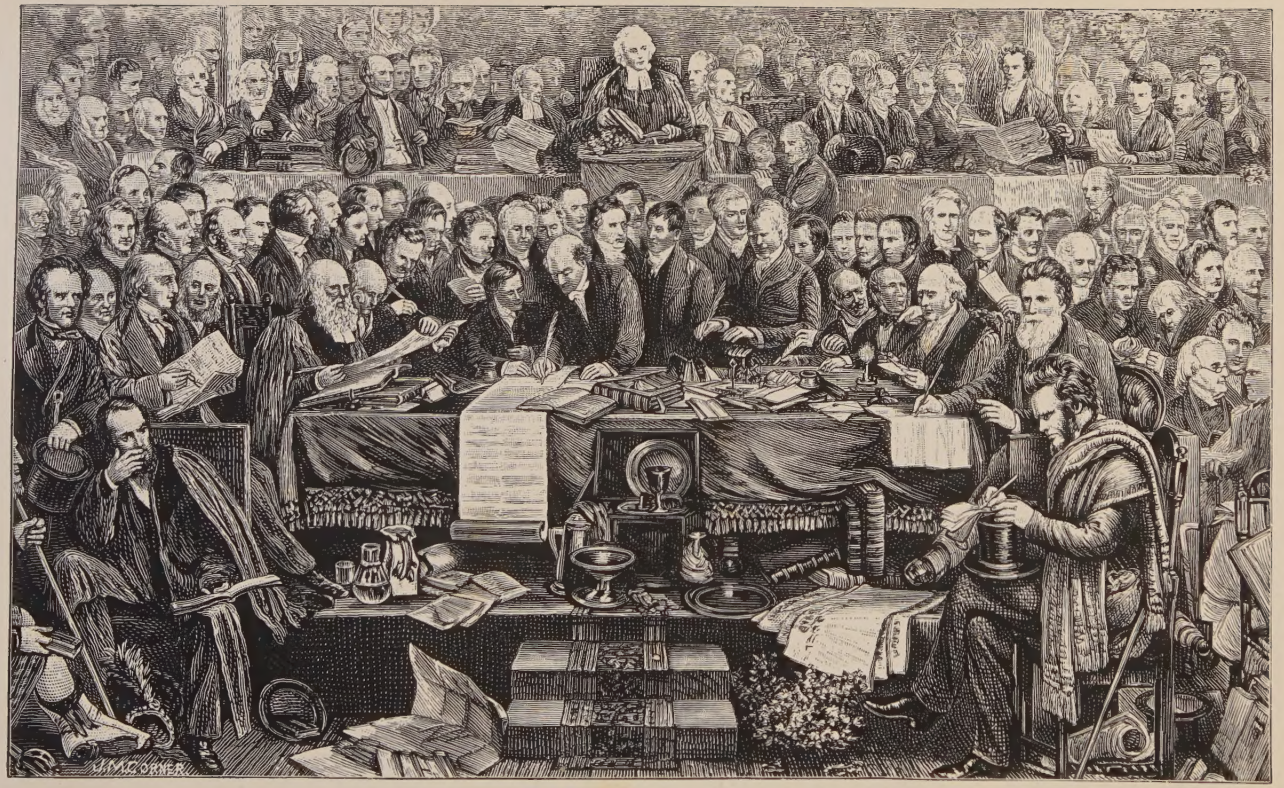
ANNALS OF THE DISRUPTION.



THE FIRST FREE CHURCH ASSEMBLY—SIGNING THE DEED OF DEMISSION.

ANNALS

OF

THE DISRUPTION;

WITH

EXTRACTS FROM THE NARRATIVES

OF

MINISTERS WHO LEFT THE SCOTTISH ESTABLISHMENT

IN

1843.

BY THE

REV. THOMAS BROWN, D.D., F.R.S.E.,

EDINBURGH.

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PREFACE.

THE object of these Annals is to recall the circumstances of the Disruption as described by the men who took part in the struggle. The general and more public aspects of the event have been admirably brought out by Dr. Buchanan in the "History of the Ten Years' Conflict," and by Dr. Hanna in his "Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers." But there are other important objects which may be served by giving more in detail the experience of individual ministers in their separate parishes. Fortunately we have from various parts of the country narratives written immediately after the event, and portions of these may now be made available to tell in their own words what it was that led the men of the Disruption to separate from the State, and what difficulties were encountered by the Church in taking up her new position.

The proposal that such narratives should be prepared seems to have originated with Mr. Craig of Rothesay, who went to Edinburgh in the spring of 1845 to bring the subject before the leading men of the Free Church. During the following autumn it was taken up by the General Assembly which met at Inverness, and a Committee was appointed, with Dr. Lorimer of Glasgow, as convener, charged with the duty of carrying out the proposal. In answer to their earnest appeals thirty-seven narratives were sent in describing the experience of different ministers—those which in the following pages are referred to as "Disr. Mss. i.-xxxvii." It was soon found, however, that there were practical

difficulties in the way, little further progress was made, and after a time the subject fell into abeyance.

In 1864 it was resumed and zealously prosecuted in a different form by Dr. Parker of Lesmahagow, then of Glasgow. The papers collected or prepared by him will be quoted as the "Parker Mss.," under the names of the different ministers and Presbyteries from whom he obtained returns.

At various times the General Assembly expressed a desire that some portions of these Disruption narratives should be published, but delay was caused by the lamented death of Dr. Parker and by other circumstances which the Committee had great reason to regret. One convener was laid aside by ill health, and another was called to the colonial field.

At last, in 1876—three years after the present convener was appointed—it was felt that a beginning must be made, and the first part of these Annals was published. The result was, that additional narratives began to come in, and the work has been carried out in the form in which it is now submitted to the Church.

It would have been greatly to the advantage of the Convener if the whole materials had been before him from the first. All that could be done was to turn the new contributions to the best account that the case admitted of as the publication went on.

In preparing this work, one great difficulty has been to avoid the sameness of so many narratives detailing similar occurrences in different localities. This has made it necessary to omit much which would otherwise have been well deserving of notice; but if there be any of the outgoing ministers who may feel that the part which they took in the sacrifices of 1843 has been overlooked, the Convener can at least say that in no case has this been done more completely than in his own.

The plan has more than once been changed as the work went on under different conveners. At one time it was intended to have been a list of the ministers, all the facts of the Disruption being grouped round their personal history. At another time it was

to have been a series of district histories, all the incidents being told in connection with the locality in which they occurred. For this latter plan there were not sufficient materials—many districts of Scotland would have appeared blank, no returns having been sent in. But the great objection to both methods was the sameness which would have been almost unavoidable.

The plan adopted, therefore, was to take a series of different subjects, each presenting a separate phase of the experience through which our Church passed in Disruption times, and to group together such facts and incidents as might cast light on that portion of the history.

The extracts—of which to a large extent the work consists—are given simply in the words of the authors. In some cases where the narrative was prolix, it has been to some extent condensed, and in a few instances the privilege of an Editor has been exercised in correcting minor defects of style, &c., such as an author would himself put right in going to press. This has been sparingly done, and in all cases with scrupulous care, to preserve the meaning of the writer.

A brief narrative is given for the purpose of connecting the different statements, and reminding the reader of how the great change was brought about. It will serve, at least, to show in what light the passing ecclesiastical events of the day were viewed in a country manse by one who entered on the duties of his parish in the midst of the Ten Years' Conflict. At all the great turning-points of the struggle it seemed—and the subsequent experience of forty years has only deepened the conviction—that the Church did what she simply could not help doing, if she were to remain faithful to Christ her Head, and to the people under her care.

The Convener desires to express his obligations to many friends who have greatly aided him in his work. His thanks are specially due to two members of the Committee —Mr. William Dickson and Mr. David Dickson—and to his friend and relative, the late Dr. Alexander Wood, for the

interest which they have taken, and the advice and assistance they have given.

It is with no desire to provoke controversy that these Annals have been prepared, but rather in the full belief that if the facts as they actually took place were better known, the hostility of adversaries would be to a great extent disarmed, and the attachment of friends confirmed and strengthened. It is true that when men are describing sacrifices and sufferings—their own or others'—there is a difficulty in avoiding a certain amount of feeling. It is not every one who can dismiss such matters as one of the sufferers does in speaking of trials overcome: "The facts which might be mentioned are of so very delicate a character that they cannot be stated, and must be left to the disclosures of that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed." If, however, we are to have a truthful view of Disruption times, such circumstances cannot be wholly suppressed; and, surely, they may now be spoken of all the more calmly and frankly when the keen feelings of former days have to so great an extent passed away.

When the subject was first entered on in 1845, the desire of the Church was to record "the wonderful goodness of God at a most trying season," and to illustrate "the reality, nearness, and condescension of His providence," "as subservient to the purposes of His grace, and the interests of His kingdom." It is hoped that these Annals, imperfect as they are, may be found to contribute to this great end, and may serve in some measure to show to the "generations to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength and His wonderful works which He hath done." Amidst all the elements of human imperfection which mingled in the great movement of 1843, it is impossible not to recognise the signal tokens of God's goodness to His servants in a day of trial, interposing to uphold and guide them for His own glory in the path of duty. And now that it has been given to the Free Church to gather into her communion so much of what constitutes the strength of Scotland—the intelligence, the faith,

and energy of her people—the younger generation, who have risen into the place of their Disruption Fathers, may well take encouragement to hold fast the noble heritage of Christian truth and sacred principle for which their Church has once more, as in the days of old, been honoured to contend.

The subjoined minute states the authority under which this publication appears.

THOMAS BROWN,
Convener of Committee.

16 Carlton Street, Edinburgh,
March, 1884.

Extract Minute of the Committee of the General Assembly of the Free Church on the Records of Disruption Ministers, 17th May, 1876.

The Committee agreed to authorise the publication of the "Annals of the Disruption," prepared by the Convener, and cordially to recommend the same to the members of the Church. In doing so, they think it right to state that, all the materials in their possession having been placed at the disposal of the Convener, he holds himself alone responsible for the selection and arrangement of the various extracts, as well as for the narrative that is given and the expressions of opinion which that narrative contains.

CONTENTS.

Part I.

THE DISRUPTION—HOW IT WAS BROUGHT ABOUT—THE IMMEDIATE RESULTS.

SECTION

I. FREE CHURCH PRINCIPLES AN INHERITANCE.

The Disruption and its Results—Descendants of Persecuted Forefathers—Personal Hardships—Choosing a Watchword—Testimony of Mr. M'Cheyne, ... pp. 1-6

II. RELIGIOUS REVIVAL A PREPARATION.

Evangelical Religion revived—Spiritual Life in Scotch Manses—And among the People — Strathbogie — Lawers and Lochtayside—Mr. Milne of Perth—The Cause of Christ at Stake—Mr. M'Cheyne's Labours—Rev. George Davidson—Mr. Mackenzie, of Farr—Dr. A. Bonar—Public Attention roused—Mr. Thomson of Muckhart, ... 7-19

III. NON-INTRUSION CONFLICT.

Leading Events—"Resolution" of the Church in 1834—Auchterarder Vacancy—Case of Marnoch, Strathbogie—Moderate Party in the Presbytery—Decision of the Assembly's Commission in 1839—Solemn Protest of the Strathbogie People—Touching and Impressive Scene—The Principle of Non-Intrusion, . . . 20-25

IV. STRUGGLE FOR SPIRITUAL INDEPENDENCE.

Church Establishment Principle—True Cause of the Disruption—Decision of the Judges—Spiritual Independence of the Church proclaimed — Sacredness of this Principle in Scotland —"The Church the *Creature of the State*"—Memorable Debate — Dr. Chalmers's "Resolution" triumphantly passed—Collision Inevitable —Summons issued against the Presbytery of Dunkeld—That Presbytery rebuked and threatened—"Interdict" in Strathbogie—Effect on the whole District—Extends Southward—Dr. Duncan

SECTION

of Ruthwell—Narrative by Mr. Wood, of Elie—Strange Time in Scotland—Parish of Stewarton assailed—Attempts at Conciliation—Danger of a Compromise—The "Claim of Right" prepared—Disregarded at first—Final decision of the Auchterarder Case—Course taken by the Moderate Party — Signs of a Fatal Crisis, ... 26-48

v. The Convocation

Welcome Suggestion thrown out—Important Meeting of 1842—Determination to stand firm—Convocation Resolutions passed—Scheme for a Sustentation Fund—Formal and Solemn Address to Government — Parting Scene — Impressions—"The Rubicon crossed," 49-57

vi. Appeal to the Country.

Ministers pledged to Resign — Disheartening Prospects — General Hostility from Newspapers—Excitement throughout Parishes—Dr. M'Donald welcomed at Dornoch—Sir James Graham's Letter—Open-air Night-meetings—Mr. Wood of Elie in Dumfriesshire—Meeting at Fintry—People ordered Home by a Factor — Mr. M'Cheyne's Visit there, ... 58-74

vii. Close of the Struggle.

Appeal rejected by Parliament—Evangelical Ministers unanimous—Individual Testimonies—Mr. M'Cheyne's Remark on the Parliamentary Debate—Popular Sympathy manifested—The "Moderate" Party precipitate Events—Stewarton Case—*Quoad Sacra* Members ejected from Church Courts—Parting Scenes, . . . 75-80

viii. Making Ready.

Plans Matured—Second "Watchword"—Local Associations formed—The Day approaches—Linlithgow Presbytery the first to flinch — Dr. M'Farlane's Manifesto — Dr. Cumming, of London, prognosticates unfavourably—Other Estimates—Conference of the Evangelical Party—Tanfield Hall prepared, . . . 81-87

ix. The Disruption.

Its Decisive Day arrives—Opening Scene at Holyrood—Ominous Occurrence there—Dr. Welsh's Sermon before the Lord Commissioner — General Assembly in St. Andrew's Church — The "Solemn Protest"—Subsequent Departure thence of the Evangelical Majority—Enforced Line of Procession—The Moderate Party perplexed — Personal Reminiscences of the Day — Lord Jeffrey—In Tanfield Hall—Singular Incident—First *Sederunt* of the Free Assembly—Tidings awaited throughout Scotland, 88-96

SECTION

X. The Free Assembly.

Deed of Demission—Number of Names affixed to it—Unbroken Ranks—The Cause of Missions made prominent—Adherence of Missionaries counted on—The National Impression, . 97-99

XI. Farewell Service in the Parish Church.

Country Ministers—No Farewell Sermons—Simple References to the Event—Brief Leave-taking—Assemblage at Woodside, Aberdeen—Rev. Dr. Grierson's Experience—Dr. Ross of Lochbroom—Pulpit Statements in general, ... 100-107

XII. First Service in the Free Church Congregation.

Scenes which took place—Roslin—Stevenston—Dr. Chalmers at Morningside — Innerwick — Monkton — Moy — Ruthwell — Ayr—Kilsyth — Aberdeen — Greenock — Errol—Kintore — Rothesay—Interposition of Providence at Rosehall, . . . 108-121

XIII. The Preaching of Churches Vacant.

Empty Parish Churches — Langton — Bolton—Island of Lewis—Shieldaig — Poolewe — Killearnan — Skirling — Watten — Hugh Miller at Resolis—The "Peace" of the "Moderates," . 122-126

XIV. The Licensed Preachers.

Numerous Adherence of Probationers and Students—Rise of this Movement—Convocation of Probationers—Encouraging to the Free Church—Personal Sacrifices thus made—Enlarged Field for their Employment, ... 127-131

XV. Leaving the Manse.

Few Details left regarding this—Some Special Cases—Durness—Latheron — Errol — Bolton — Eastwood — Lochbroom — Painful "Flittings"—Ministers' Wives under Trial—Letter from a True Helpmate—Various Instances of the Husband's Courage being thus cheered, ... 132-143

XVI. The Ministers' Reasons for Going Out.

Rev. Mr. Stewart of Aberdeen—Dr. Bonar of Larbert—Other such Testimonies—A Mental Struggle undergone by many—Christ's Headship the Main Ground—Individual Addresses to Parishioners—Rev. Dr. M'Cosh's Pamphlet—Mr. Taylor of Flisk—Mr. Wood of Elie—Mr. Gregory of Anstruther—Letter from an Aged Minister—Mr. Anderson of Kippen, his remarkable "One Reason for going out," 144-157

XVII. Reasons for Going Out given by the People.

Extensive Support by the Laity—Dislike of "Moderatism"—Spread of Serious Religion in the Church—Earnestness generally found on

SECTION

the Evangelical Side—Prompt Intelligence among the Humbler Ranks—Ecclesiastical Independence well understood—Cases of Perplexity—Rural Incidents in illustration—Working-men's Logic —Johnstone, Renfrewshire—A Fife Woman's Subscription to the Free Church—Dundee "Betty"—Dr. Chalmers on the People's Liberality, ... 158-172

XVIII. A CONFIRMATION.

The Establishment's General Assembly Puzzled—No Answer to the "Protest"—Settled Erastianism—*Quoad Sacra* Ministers left out —These and other Circumstances tend to show the Soundness of Disruption Procedure, ... 173-175

XIX. THE DWELLINGS TO WHICH MINISTERS RETIRED.

Want of House Accommodation—Trials cheerfully borne—Instances of Hardships—Manse Sites refused—Conspicuous Case at Farr—The Two Mackenzies of Tongue—Mr. Baird, of Cockburnspath—Mr. M'Vean, of Iona—Berriedale—Ruthwell Manse—Painful Circumstances at Lairg, ... 176-189

XX. THE ADVANCEMENT OF RELIGION.

New Responsibility felt — Impression among the People—Fresh Impulse—Prayerful Spirit deepened—More Earnest Preaching—The Establishment and the Free Church contrasted—Pastoral Work Advanced—Various Instances—"Revivals"—Luss—Ayr—Flisk—"Awakening" in Skye—Wide Increase of Evangelism—Disruption Sacrifices not in vain—Future Good betokened, 190-206

Part II.

THE REBUILDING—THE SACRIFICES.

XXI. THE SITUATION IN JUNE, 1848.

First Difficulties of the Free Church—Magnitude of Undertaking—Serious Opposition—Prospective View, ... 207-209

XXII. TEMPORARY PLACES OF WORSHIP.

Old Chapels, &c., obtained—Meeting-houses lent by Dissenters—Barns used—Other Curious Expedients—Communion at Helmsdale—Temporary Erections—Open-air Worship—Site-refusing—Illustrative Notices — Highland Tent-preaching — Consequent Hardships—Wide Sowing of the Gospel Seed, . . 210-245

SECTION

XXIII. CHURCH BUILDING.

General Plan for New Churches—The Building Committee—Contributions to the Fund—Difficulty as to Sites—Lord Aberdeen's Kindness—Establishment Opposition—Case of Methlic—Refusals of Building-materials—Janet Fraser's Gift of a Site—Mrs. Gardyne's Case—Aristocratic Hostility—Liberal Friends—Heartiness of the People—Favourable Circumstances—The Committee's Reports, 1843-46—Retrospective Interest of the Transition Period, ... 246-290

XXIV. THE SUSTENTATION FUND.

Originality of this Scheme—By whom first conceived—Its Main Principles—How organised—Dr. Chalmers's Account of its Success—Self-denial among Ministers—Slow Increase of the "Equal Dividend"—"Power of Littles"—Dr. R. Buchanan's Management—Instances of Liberality—General Results—Indirect Benefits—Its apparent Stability, ... 291-308

XXV. THE SCHOOLS.

Elementary Schools set up—Dr. Chalmers's Statement at Tanfield—Privations of Outed Teachers—Tribute of Admiration paid to them—School-building Proposal—Mr. Macdonald's Laborious Tour—Amusing Incident—His visit to London—Statement in the Assembly, 1844—The Moderator's Thanks to Mr. Macdonald—The Church in earnest for Education—Note, . . . 309-326

XXVI. THE NEW COLLEGE.

Divinity Hall proposed—Memorable Appeal by Dr. Candlish—A Free Church College opened in Edinburgh—Mr. Macdonald's Offer—He raises £10,000—His Bold Suggestion—Dr. Candlish's Humorous Comment—New College erected—Its Gratifying Success—Two Sister Colleges established, ... 327-337

XXVII. MANSES.

The Manse-building Scheme—Its Importance—Migratory Residence of Ministers—Privations endured—Rev. E. Findlater—Rev. A. W. Milroy—Rev. Mr. Garioch—Dr. Guthrie requested to undertake the Scheme—He accepts his Commission—Hearty Response of the People—One Painful Circumstance, . . . 338-352

XXVIII. TRIALS OF THE PEOPLE.

Bitter Feeling on the part of Adversaries—Cases of Intimidation—Treatment of Paupers—Penalty for Conscientious Worship—Family Divisions—Wish to exclude Free Church Members from Burial in Parish Churchyards—A "Reign of Terror" set up, ... 353-371

SECTION

XXIX. HARD WORK.

The Toil required of Ministers—Unequal Distribution—Gospel Preaching welcomed—Odd Circumstances occur—Cases of Health impaired and Life endangered—Martyr Spirit needed, . 372-382

XXX. TRIALS OF MINISTERS.

Anxieties in Manses—Examples—Pressure of Private Appeals—Generous and Chivalrous Spirit—Indignities endured—Suffering undergone in Country Charges—Solemn and Touching Scenes—Dying Testimonies, ... 383-408

Part III.

DIFFICULTIES OF THE POSITION—PROGRESS.

XXXI. REFUSAL OF SITES.

Difficulties at First — Private Appeals unavailing — House of Commons Committee—Case of Ballater—Duthil, Strathspey—Kilmuir, Skye—Paible, North Uist—Donald Matheson—Rev. Norman M'Leod—Eig—Coll—Torosay—Mull—Strontian, Floating Church — Landlords' Reasons — Canonbie — Wanlockhead—Suffering and Death—Disturbances at Resolis, . . 409-449

XXXII. FRIENDS.

Kilsyth Weavers—Farm Overseers—Mr. Morton—Mr. Cumming, Factor, Braemar—Mr. Inglis, Farmer, Lochlee—Mr. Walker, Kilcalmonell—Mr. Lockhart, of Laggan, Ballantrae—Messrs. Ross, Bryden, Cathcart, Ochiltree—Mr. Stewart, Braco—Miss Donald—Marchioness of Breadalbane, and Lady Hannah Tharp—Countess of Effingham, Unst—Edinburgh Laymen—Glasgow Laymen—Heritors—Cluny Macpherson—George Lyon of Glenogil—Mr. Rigg of Tarvit—Marquis of Breadalbane, . . . 450-467

XXXIII. PREJUDICES REMOVED.

Lord Aberdeen and Sir J. Graham—Mr. Sym of Edinburgh, and Mr. Craig of Sprouston—Collessie, Mr. Macfarlane's Letter—St. Cyrus—Callander, Mr. M'Laren—Kilwinning—Torosay—Heritors at Latheron—Portpatrick, General Hunter Blair, . 468-483

XXXIV. QUOAD SACRA CHURCHES.

Difficulties, Lord Cockburn—Dr. Chalmers and Church Extension — Equitable Adjustment refused after Disruption — Cases,

SECTION

Saltcoats — Sheuchan — Trinity, Aberdeen — Lybster — Blairingone—Ardoch—Saturday-night Surprises—Attempts to seize the Church and Refuse the Debt—Lord Ivory's Decision—Churches saved—Cases of Hardship—Dr. Beith and the New Church at Stirling—Ladyloan, Arbroath—Lady Glenorchy's, Edinburgh, ... 484-500

XXXV. THE MISSIONARIES.

Strong Inducements to prefer the Establishment—The Whole Staff Unanimous—Dr. Duff's Reasons—The Missionaries are expelled from the Premises at Calcutta and Bombay—Dr. Smyttan—Generous Aid—New Premises, Increased Success—The Aberdeen Ladies and the Scientific Apparatus—Nagpore—South Africa—Conversions at Calcutta—Funds, ... 501-513

XXXVI. PLEDGES UNFULFILLED.

The Trial it was to go out—Cases of those who drew back—Unhappy Effect on the People, ... 514-522

XXXVII. DISRUPTION IN ENGLAND.

The London Presbytery broken up—Dr. Candlish at Cambridge—Movement by the Rev. J. Hunter of Bath—Dr. N. Paterson and Mr. Buchan of Hamilton—Manchester, . . . 523-528

XXXVIII. LONDON REMINISCENCES, BY REV. J. C. BURNS, KIRKLISTON.

London Presbytery, Contest for Minute-Book—Churches kept—Exeter Hall—Back Parlour in Berners Street—James Nisbet—Mr. Bunting's Narrative—Baptist Noel—Wesleyans the Chief Supporters—Dr. Bunting—Independents, Baptists—Manchester—Southampton—Oxford, the Vice-Chancellor interviewed—Cambridge—Birmingham—Rev. J. A. James—Money raised, 529-543

XXXIX. IRELAND AND AMERICA.

Irish Deputation at Tanfield—Assembly at Belfast—Warm Support through the Country—Dr. Cunningham and Mr. Ferguson in America—Mr. Ferguson—Dr. Cunningham—Dr. Hodge—*Princeton Review*—Moses Stuart—Kirwan—The Free Church invited, 544-550

XL. THE CONTINENT.

Interest taken in our Church's Struggles—Mr. Frederick Monod—Dr. Merle D'Aubigné—Disruption in Canton de Vaud—Disruption of the French Protestant Church—Deputies' Meeting at Tanfield—Dr. Stewart at Leghorn—Preaching Stations—Foreign Students at our Colleges—Professor Francis Balogh, . . . 551-559

SECTION

XLI. THE COLONIES.

Church Question in Canada—Candlish nearly sent out of Scotland—Canadian Disruption—Deputations—Theological Colleges—Dr. Burns goes out—Revival—Disruption in Australia—Mr. Salmon—Gold Discoveries—Dr. Cairns—Dr. Nicolson, Hobart Town—Dr. Burns, Dunedin—Dr. Cairns in Edinburgh, . . . 560-576

XLII. EXTERNAL PROGRESS.

Few expected to join at First—Dr. Candlish is hopeful—Ministers and Congregations multiplied—Table showing the advance, 577-581

XLIII. THE DISRUPTION IN GLENISLA.

Narrative of Events in the Glen—A Strong Free Church formed, 582-597

XLIV. SOCIAL STANDING OF FREE CHURCH MINISTERS.

Loss of Status dreaded—Lord Cockburn describes the trial—Social Relations modified—Broken Ties—Dr. Guthrie and Lord Medwyn—Experience of Ministers—Marquis of Bute and Mr. Bannatyne, 598-606

XLV. THE FUNDS.

Misgivings of Friends—Anticipations of Adversaries—Estimate by Dr. Chalmers—Table showing the Amount of Money realised, 607-610

Part IV.

THE EFFECT OF THE DISRUPTION ON THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF SCOTLAND.

XLVI. DANGERS IN 1843.

Christian Work done by Free Church—Difficulties—Danger of Re-action, of Controversial Spirit, of Boastfulness—Warning by Dr. Candlish—Dr. H. Grey—Rev. A. Gray, . . . 611-614

XLVII. CHURCH'S TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST'S HEADSHIP.

This runs through her Past History—Disruption Testimony—Dr. James Hamilton—*Quarterly Review*—Meeting at Dumfries—Glenkens—Larbert—Dr. Angell James—Dr. Hodge, . 615-622

XLVIII. THE CALL TO WORK.

Dr. Chalmers—Mr. Sym—Robert Paul, Esq., . . . 623-626

XLIX. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1844.

Personal Religion—Dr. Charles Brown's Sermon—Dr. Chalmers—Dr. Laird—Rev. Andrew Gray—Dr. Elder, of Rothesay—Dr.

SECTION

Hetherington—Mr. Johnston—F. Monod—Deputations sent out—Dr. Thomson, Paisley, ... 627-637

L. The Whole Members of the Church Invited.

Purer Communion in Free Church—Roslin, Woodside, &c.—Mr. Melville, of Logie—Mr. Thomson, Prestonkirk—Kirk-Session of Dunnichen—Young Men's Societies—Appeals by Dr. Chalmers, &c., ... 638-648

LI. The Highlands.

People adhere generally to Free Church—Kiltearn—Latheron—Preaching Deputations—*Breadalbane* Yacht—Famine—Dr. Beith—Resolis—Mr. Fraser, of Kirkhill, in Skye—Dr. Begg at Applecross—Mr. M'Bride, Rothesay—Torosay in Mull, . . 649-665

LII. "The Men."

Two Parties among "The Men"—Communion at Snizort—"The Men's Day" at Duirness—Mr. Findlater—Professor Blackie—Dr. M'Lauchlan's View—Mr. Mackenzie of Farr, . . 666-682

LIII. The Ladies' Associations.

Supply of Gaelic Preachers deficient—Ladies' Associations formed—Student-Teachers—Favourable Educational Results—Nearly One Hundred go forward to the Ministry of the Free Church—Contributions raised—Blessing to the People, . . . 683-690

LIV. St. Kilda.

Its neglected State—Dr. M'Donald of Urquhart's Visit—Church and Manse built—People join the Free Church—Deprived of Church and refused a Site—Remain firm—After Ten Years get use of the Church—Minister settled, ... 691-699

LV. Rural Districts.

The Moderates—Dr. Ramsay Davidson—Mr. Hutchison, of Uddingston—"Zaccheus"—Open-air Preaching—Mr. Cormick, of Kirriemuir—Muirkirk—Northern Parish—Favourable Results, 700-712

LVI. Sabbath Observance.

The Cause zealously taken up—Parish Ministers—Sir A. Agnew—Railway System—Principal Fairbairn—Post-Office—Appeals by Mr. Nixon and Dr. Chalmers, ... 713-717

LVII. Temperance.

Intemperance the Great Obstacle—Committee appointed—House of Commons appealed to—Kirk-Sessions enjoined, . . 718-720

ANNALS OF THE DISRUPTION.

I. Free Church Principles an Inheritance.

The Disruption and its results will be best understood if we begin by inquiring how it came that so many of the ministers and people were prepared to meet the crisis of 1843, and to act the part which they did. In not a few cases they tell us that little was needed in the way of special preparation. Dr. Foote, of Aberdeen, in speaking of his own experience, mentions, what was equally true of many of his brethren: "In my early years I held those views which belong to evangelical, orthodox, thorough-paced Presbyterianism. . . . I take no credit for standing to what I ever felt to be the essential principles of the Church of Scotland; but I bless God that, after co-operating with others, . . . to prevent the necessity of breaking our connection with the State, I felt no desire, and no temptation, not to act with decision when that necessity became plain."* These views would seem in some cases to have come down by hereditary descent from those who had fought the same battle in former times. Dr. Patrick M'Farlan, of Greenock, whose name stands first at the Deed of Demission, belonged to a family who for four generations in succession held office in the Church of Scotland, his great-grandfather having been ordained shortly after the Revolution. Dr. Welsh, who headed the procession on the day of the Disruption, was descended from forefathers who, amidst the upper moorlands round the sources of the Tweed, had suffered for the cause of Christ in the days of persecution. Mr. Carment, of Rosskeen, was the grandson of John Carment, born in 1672,

* Dis. Mss. xxiv. p. 2.

and baptised under cloud of night among the hills of Irongray by the well-known John Welsh. These men—and there were others of similar ancestry—were obviously in the right place when, amidst the struggles of 1843, they proved their hereditary attachment to the cause of Christ's Crown and Covenant.

Apart, however, from all connection in the way of lineal descent, these historical associations exercised a powerful influence among the people of Scotland. Mr. Taylor, of Flisk, thus refers to the effect of such memories on his own mind: "I owe much to the early and frequent reading of the 'Scots Worthies,' from which I saw that the principles of the Free Church are those for which the Church of Scotland has always contended in her best times. These principles are truly Scottish, as well as truly scriptural. They have been baptised by the sufferings and blood of our fathers, and this has doubly endeared them to me. As I benefited so much by the reading of that book, I have generally recommended it, . . . as one of the best books to throw light on our principles and position."* The results of such reading, accordingly, were met with, not only among the ministers, but in many districts among the people also. At Monkton, in Ayrshire, it is stated that "much of the spirit of the old Covenanters" remained. "There are few dwellings in which there is not a small library, and in these libraries there is generally a well-thumbed copy of the 'Scots Worthies,' the 'Cloud of Witnesses,' or 'Foxe's Book of Martyrs,' in which they find that the principles for which the Church is contending are principles in maintenance of which their fathers shed their blood."†

Thus, over wide districts of Scotland there were very many even of the humblest classes to whom the names and principles connected with covenanting times had long been familiar. Weavers at the loom, artisans in the workshop, ploughmen in the fields, and shepherds out among the hills, cherished those memories and felt their power, and all through the conflict, we find allusions to those times meeting us at every step.

Sometimes there were local associations which gave special force to the appeal. At Lesmahagow, the people lived in a district round which lay Bothwell Bridge, and Airsmoss, and

* Dis. Mss. xxxvii. pp. 1, 2. † Dis. Mss. xxxiv. p. 2.

Drumclog, and the spot where John Brown, of Priesthill, was shot by Claverhouse. A single example may be given of those mentioned by Dr. Parker to illustrate the ties which connect the present with that former generation. "James Dykes, of Leadshead, is the senior member of my session. Though now [1846] at the advanced age of eighty-seven, he is regular in his attendance at church from Sabbath to Sabbath, not excepting wet and stormy days. He is the great-grandson of John Steel, of Waterhead, who occupied so conspicuous a place in the troublous times of the Second Charles. He was by far the most distinguished man in this district of country ['looked up to as leader and counsellor of the Covenanters in the West']. He was driven from his house and lands by the force of persecution, and wandered as an outlaw for many a weary day. He was present with a brother at Airsmoss, and narrowly escaped with his life. Towards the close of the battle, a trooper rode up to Steel and his brother, who were making their way from the field on foot. They were both exceedingly nimble, but the horseman soon came up to them, and addressing the laird of Waterhead, cried, 'Stand, dog, and die.' The laird turning dexterously round on his pursuer, with a heavy back-stroke brought him to the ground. He then set his brother on the trooper's horse, and he himself ran on foot. . . . His daughter, Isabella, the grandmother of my elder, was one of the first children baptised in Lesmahagow Parish Church after the Revolution. . . . She was married to William Dykes, in St. Bride's Chapel, Parish of Avondale; and after she became a widow, she resided with her son, the father of my elder. He remembers her well. He was sixteen years old when she died, and many a winter night he has sat by her side listening to the tales she told of the times of persecution, and of the eventful scenes through which her father passed. . . . It is interesting to remark that he is separated by so small an interval—as it were a single life—from the period in which men were doomed to imprisonment and death, for no other cause than choosing to worship God according to the dictates of conscience."* In a parish where such hereditary connections prevailed, it was no

* Dis. Mss. xxxi. p. 28.

accidental coincidence that, when the day of trial came in 1843, Dr. Parker, on abandoning the Establishment, was accompanied by five of his seven elders, and by a strong body of 800 communicants, comprising in their number fifty of the farmers who belonged to the district.

At Edinburgh also such local associations with those old times were not unfrequently referred to. Thus, at one of the meetings, an office-bearer appealed to the people: "Lawsuits, fines, and actions of damages have now superseded the gibbet and the stake. But the spirit of persecution is as truly at work as ever it was in the days of King Charles. . . . What cowardly dastards we must be, if we lose without a struggle what cost our forefathers so much to gain. Imprisonment, fines, death, tortures had no terrors for them. . . . Yonder lies the Greyfriars' Churchyard, where our fathers solemnly subscribed the Covenant—some of them with their very blood; and there, sir, lies the Grassmarket, where the fires of persecution were often lighted. . . . Who is there who can stand where we now stand . . . without feeling the glow of enthusiastic zeal thrilling through his every nerve and fibre? Let us, then, with one heart and mind, declare our unalterable adherence to the principles for which our fathers bled and died, and for which our Church is now contending. Let us declare that, come what may, we will abide by these, and stand by the ministers who are ready to maintain them to the uttermost. But, sir, let us not attempt to do this in our own strength; . . . let us resolve to do it in the strength of God." *

Sometimes there were cases in which the *personal* element was specially prominent, as in a speech by Mr. Carment, of Rosskeen, already referred to. After alluding to the hardships of the Church, he went on to say: "Bad as matters are, we should remember it is no new thing that has befallen us. . . . My son is the outed minister of Comrie. On coming South I went to see him, for there was some work waiting for me. He had got an infant son, and the boy had been left unbaptised till the old man, his grandfather, should come and baptise him. At Comrie, just as in the Highlands, the congregation had to

* *Witness*, 4th January, 1843.

meet on the bare hillside ; and when the child was brought up to me to be baptised, it did forcibly strike me, as well it might, that the circumstances in which we were placed were not new. And so I said to the people before I began : 'Here am I . . . going to baptise my grandson in the open air on the bare hillside—I, whose grandfather was baptised in the open air on the bare hillside, in the times of the last great persecution. . . . My father has told me that in carrying out the infant under the cloud of night they had to pass the curate's house, and they were greatly alarmed lest it should cry in the passing, and bring out the curate on them. But it kept quiet, and they regarded the thing as a special Providence." *

Frequent allusions such as these meet us all through the conflict, not only influencing men's views, but moulding the very terms and modes of expression in which the great principles were set before the country. "I have often thought of late," Dr. Candlish said on the eve of the Disruption, "since we have been compelled to make ourselves familiar with the stories of the martyrs, . . . that in the course of these painful controversies we have not yet got a suitable watchword . . . a banner worthy of the days of old, worthy of the Covenant. *Non-intrusion* is a good enough word, but it would look ill upon some lonely gravestone in the wilds of Ayr. *Spiritual independence* is a good enough phrase, but it would scarcely bear to be emblazoned on our banner in the day of battle, when the stormy winds shall blow. It is not non-intrusion or spiritual independence that will do now, but the old time-worn and hallowed watchword of our fathers—'*The Crown-rights of the Redeemer.*' . . . We shall maintain these Crown-rights, perhaps in a state of exile from the Establishment, perhaps in a state of suffering—of toil and privation. It is possible that even out of the Establishment, the claims which have been put forth against us by Cæsar and his Courts may follow us, for indications and hints were given in Parliament of principles which, if carried out, would deny freedom, not only to the Church Established, but to the Church of Christ. Be that as it may, oh, let us be resolved and determined that we shall main-

* *Witness* Newspaper, 4th November, 1843.

tain the rights of Christ the King, whether in or out of the Establishment—under persecution if need be." *

Thus, as the controversy went on it connected itself with the struggles of former times, but not often was that connection more fittingly expressed than in the words of M'Cheyne: "In generations past this cause has been maintained in Scotland at all hands and against all enemies, and if God calls us to put our feet in the blood-stained footsteps of the Scottish Worthies, I dare not boast, but I will pray that the calm faith of Hugh Mackail, and the cheerful courage of Donald Cargill, may be given me." †

* *Witness*, 25th March, 1843. The reader will observe there was no expectation that by going out at the Disruption the Free Church would, *ipso facto*, be free from the encroachments of the Civil Courts. Irrespective of all consequences, however, we shall see how the Church, for the relief of her own conscience, had to abandon her position in the Establishment, in order that she might remain faithful to Christ. Whatever came of it, she would at least not be compromised by retaining her emoluments under such conditions as came to be attached to them.

† Memoir, p. 560.

II. Religious Revival a Preparation.

But there was another cause which prepared men for the change, and which was much more generally and powerfully felt —the revived spirit of vital religion then pervading the country. This is frankly spoken of by some of the ministers as having been experienced by themselves. Of all such examples the most conspicuous is that of Dr. Chalmers, as given in his biography. In the Disruption Mss. there are similar instances more briefly referred to.

"I had been led," says Mr. Innes, of Deskford, "by the blessing of God to a more evangelical style of preaching and to greater seriousness than at the earlier period of my ministry."*

Mr. Jeffrey, of Girthon, stated, a few days before his death, "that from the first he had preached the Gospel to the light he had received, but that a great change had taken place fifteen years before, when his views of religion became much more earnest and deeply evangelical."†

Such, also, was the experience of Dr. Landsborough, of Stevenston, who, as appears from a letter of his friend, Professor Thomas Brown, had been brought forward in 1811 by Dr. Inglis and the "desperately moderate men." Looking back to that period he states in his Diary for 1842, "How great was then my darkness, how unfit my spirit for the solemn work on which I was about to be engaged." And again, under another date, "My birthday. What changes in the world since my life began. How many changes in my own life. Thou hast borne with me. . . . Thou hast enlightened me. I have reason to hope that I am renewed, and on the way to heaven."‡ It seems to have

* Dis. Mss. xv. p. 1. † Parker Mss., Pres. of Kirkcudbright.
‡ Memoir, p. 163.

been at a comparatively early period in his ministry that the change had taken place, and we find him in the midst of the revival-work of 1840, labouring in his parish, and rejoicing with all his heart.

Throughout the manses of Scotland, it is believed that such cases were not rare. But few were so remarkable as that of Mr. Roderick M'Leod, whose name is identified with the revival of religion in Skye. "During the first three years of my ministry," he says, "I was an entire stranger to the Gospel scheme of salvation; and no wonder, for the staple theology of Skye preaching in those days was nothing better than scraps of Blair's Sermons or of some other equally meagre stuff, so that I have often thought that I scarcely ever heard the Gospel till I began to preach it myself, with the exception of going two or three times to the Gaelic Chapel in Aberdeen." He refers to one evangelical minister in Skye, Mr. Shaw, of Bracadale, from whom he borrowed a treatise of Bellamy's, which threw him into a state of alarm for his own salvation. It was a sermon by Dr. Chalmers which opened his eyes to the Gospel. After this he preached two years at the station of Arnisort, and then, on the death of Mr. Shaw, was translated to Bracadale. His change of views and principles brought a corresponding change in dealing with his parishioners, more especially on the subject of baptism, and there followed a series of collisions with the Moderate Presbytery, who would fain have deposed him, and cast him out of the Church. The Disruption is accordingly spoken of as having brought him "unmingled relief, and a happy termination to a twice ten years' conflict." *

It was among the people, however, that this awakening was most general, and its effects most clearly seen in preparing men for the Disruption. The concurrence of testimony on this point is very striking. Thus at Kilsyth, well known as the scene of a remarkable revival under the Rev. Mr. Robe in 1742, there occurred a similar time of blessing in 1839, when "from July to October the whole community flocked to hear the Word with the deepest earnestness." This movement, which attracted at the time the attention of all Scotland, is described by Dr. Burns

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Skye.

as "a sun blink of Gospel light and warmth;" and, he adds, "the fact is unquestionable, that the greater number of those who have been seriously impressed, at the time referred to, have attached themselves to the Free Church." * It was an interesting coincidence, that a prayer meeting which dates from the time of Mr. Robe, and which for fifty years had been held in an upper room, gave accommodation to the first meetings for organising the Free Church movements in the parish.

In Strathbogie similar preparatory work is described. Mr. Cowie, a dissenting minister in Huntly, "a man of eminent piety, vigorous mind, . . and remarkable zeal in his Master's work," is said to have produced a powerful effect on the district, and to have left many seals of his ministry. "Another of these Strathbogie parishes is Botriphnie, where, about eighty years ago, there was a godly parish minister, Mr. Campbell, to whose ministry the people were wont to travel for many miles." One of the fruits of his ministry was Mr. Cowie just referred to. "It is said that a godly farmer, who had been converted under the ministry of Mr. Campbell, mourning over the almost universal deadness both of ministers and people, was wont to spend much of the night in prayer in his barn for times of awakening and revival, and that long after this godly man was gathered to his fathers, this very barn was it in which, for five and a-half years, the Free Church congregation found a shelter for the worship of God, and in which many precious sermons were preached, and not a few souls were converted."†

A revival of religion is recorded to have taken place in Lawers and Lochtayside in 1815. Again a similar work appeared in 1834, and subsequent years, in connection with the ministry of Mr. Campbell, of Lawers, and his younger brother in Glenlyon, assisted by the Rev. William Burns. Often would Mr. Campbell, of Lawers, afterward of Kiltearn, "when in company with Christian friends, revert to these great days of the Son of man." His younger brother, Mr. Campbell, of Glenlyon, afterwards of Tarbat, writing under date October, 1864, mentions:—"I witnessed three religious revivals—one in Breadalbane and Glenlyon, in the year 1816;

* Dis. Mss. xxix. pp. 2, 3.

† Dis. Mss. x. pp. 1, 2, 5.

one in Tarbat and other parishes in Ross-shire, in the years 1840 and 1841; a third in Lawers in the year 1861. Let sovereign grace have all the glory." Both brothers took a decided part in the "Ten Years' Conflict," and were of signal service to the Free Church in 1843, and afterwards.

In Ross-shire, Mr. Flyter, of Alness, gives his view of how men were made ready for the Disruption :—"Preparation was made in regard to elders and people in the influences with which the Lord accompanied the preaching of the Gospel. This influence was striking and impressive in various parts of the country in 1840. About that time in every district of the parish of Alness there were some sin-sick souls." *

Dr. Mackintosh, of Tain, bears his decided testimony to the reality of this movement. "What I believe to be a genuine revival of religion—the work of the Spirit of God—has taken place during the past year [1840] to a considerable extent in this parish and district. . . . There was at first a good deal of outward excitement on some occasions under the Word, but this gradually diminished. . . . The experience which I had of the revival of religion, though limited and partial, is such as would lead me to long for its continuance and to pant for its return, as bringing with it the blessed results for which a minister of Christ would desire to live and die—the conversion of sinners and the increasing consolation and edification of saints." †

At Collace, Dr. A. Bonar speaks of the parish having been "prepared by a work of Divine grace in the souls of many among us. After my return from the mission to the Jews in Palestine and other countries a decided awakening took place. In the month of May, 1840, there was a deep impression on many, attended with outward expressions of concern upon one occasion when we were met during the week for prayer, but in general the work was silent. After that date one and another at different intervals seemed brought under the power of the truth. On the fast day appointed by our Assembly—in prospect of the solemn crisis of the Disruption—two persons

* Parish of Alness, by the Rev. A. Flyter, Parker Mss.

† Memorials of Rev. C. Mackintosh, D.D., p. 53.

were led to the cross. In all these cases, without one exception, the individuals became most decided in their views regarding the Headship and Crown-rights of the Redeemer; and neither in this nor any of the neighbouring parishes did any of these awakened persons remain in the Establishment when the crisis came." *

Mr. Carment, of Rosskeen (Ross-shire), writes, under date January, 1841 :—"Though the prospects of the beloved Church of my fathers are becoming every day more dark and gloomy, . . . yet the prospects of this parish are becoming increasingly bright and pleasing. There has been since 1840 a very remarkable awakening and religious revival in this parish and neighbourhood, especially among the young; and numbers, I have reason to believe, have been savingly converted. . . . I have been enabled to preach frequently on week days to attentive, impressed, and weeping congregations, who flock by night and by day to hear the Word." At the previous communion he had admitted more communicants than during the whole of the preceding eighteen years of his ministry. "It seems to me *a token for good that our present contendings as a Church are approved by God,* when revivals of religion are taking place in various parts of Scotland at a time when the Court of Session is, like the Scottish Council of old, trying not only to intrude unacceptable ministers into parishes by an illegal assumption of power not sanctioned by the constitution of the country, but in direct violation of all those Statutes which were passed to secure the Church against all such attempts." †

One additional example may be given, on the testimony of Mr. M'Cheyne, as to the work in Dundee :—"It is my decided and solemn conviction, in the sight of God, that a very remarkable and glorious work of God, in the conversion of sinners and edifying of saints, has taken place in this parish and neighbourhood. This work I have observed going on from the very beginning of my ministry in this place in November, 1836, and it has continued to the present time. But it was much more remarkable in the autumn of 1839, when I was abroad on a mission

* Dis. Mss. xxi. pp. 1, 2.

† Parish of Rosskeen, Rev. J. Carment, Parker Mss.

of inquiry to the Jews, and when my place was occupied by the Rev. W. C. Burns. . . . Immediately after the beginning of the Lord's work at Kilsyth, the Word of God came with such power to the hearts and consciences of the people here, and their thirst for hearing it became so intense, that the evening-classes in the schoolroom were changed into densely-crowded congregations in the church ; and for nearly four months it was found desirable to have public worship almost every night. At this time, also, many prayer meetings were formed, some of which were strictly private or fellowship meetings ; and others, conducted by persons of some Christian experience, were open to persons under concern about their souls. . . . Many hundreds under deep concern for their souls have come from first to last to converse with the ministers, so that I am deeply persuaded the number of those who have received saving benefit is greater than any one will know till the judgment day." *

Nor was it only at Dundee that such effects were produced ; a blessing was seen to go with Mr. M'Cheyne's labours in other districts. At Wanlockhead, Mr. Hastings speaks of a change having taken place in his congregation "since the sacrament in July, 1841, when the late Rev. Mr. Murray M'Cheyne assisted me. Many, indeed, were melted under his preaching, and became obviously more serious in their demeanour, and the chapel afterwards more regularly crowded." . . . "The people here understood well the principles of the Free Church." †

In the district of Buchan, Aberdeenshire, "the various parishes were blessed with the preaching of the saintly M'Cheyne in the early part of 1843, and in Ellon, as elsewhere, he left precious fruits of his ministry. Accordingly, though a year before the Disruption there were not known to be half-a-dozen Non-intrusionists in the whole parish of Ellon, when the event came, a congregation of above a hundred, with more than eighty communicants, was at once formed in this stronghold of Moderatism ; and since that time the congregation has greatly increased [1846]." ‡

It was a striking circumstance that the whole circle of friends

* Memoir, pp. 495, 496. † Dis. Mss. xix. ‡ Dis. Mss. ix. p. 4.

with whom Mr. M'Cheyne was specially associated were of one mind through the whole time of the great conflict. There was much to be done for Christ in Scotland, and God had raised up a remarkable band of labourers in the zeal of their first love, and in the strength of early manhood. What Dr. Horatius Bonar says of one of their number—Mr. Milne, of Perth—was equally true of them all:—"In the movements of the 'Ten Years' Conflict' he took no lukewarm part, though by no means an Ecclesiastic in the common sense of the word; he was a thorough Presbyterian—a vigorous maintainer of Reformation doctrine and Reformation discipline. Those who counted upon his laxity in regard to Church principles, and who were persuaded that a man so spiritual and so silent in Church Courts would take no part in the struggles of these years, were surprised at the resolute decision which he showed in adopting, and the energy in maintaining, the great ecclesiastical principles then battled for. . . . The ecclesiastical turmoil seemed to elevate, not to depress—to spiritualise, not to secularise. All the brethren whom he loved, and in whose fellowship he delighted, were of one mind on the questions which were dividing the Church Courts. Hence they could meet together, confer together, pray together. All were of one heart and of one soul. . . . The Church questions agitated were not those of partisanship or routine, they were vital and spiritual, both in themselves and in their bearings. They centred in Christ Himself—Christ, the Lawgiver of the Church—Christ, the Lawgiver of the realm. Hence, in handling them, Christian men were dealing with the Master and the Master's honour. The questions were summed up in two: 'Shall Christ give laws to the Church, or shall the Church give laws to herself? Shall Christ give laws to the nations, or shall the nations give laws to themselves?' Christian men had not to come down to secularities and externalisms in maintaining these. They felt they were discussing matters which touched their spiritual interests on every side, and they were contending for truths which brought their souls in contact with the Lord Himself." *

The testimony of such men was of incalculable value—drawing

* Life of Rev. J. Milne, by Dr. Horatius Bonar, pp. 74-76.

the hearts and prayers of God's people, and constraining some even of the adversaries to treat the cause with unwilling respect.

These extracts and incidents have been selected as referring to different localities, in order to show how widespread was the movement which then pervaded Scotland, and how deeply the questions at issue were felt to be connected with the most sacred feelings of the people. As the struggle went on, it became obvious to very many men of the truest spiritual discernment that it was the cause of Christ itself in the land which was at stake; and wherever men's minds were most earnest—wherever religious life was most active, there the conviction was deepest. In that lay the secret of the whole movement which took so many by surprise. If something of the fervour of old covenanting times again broke forth, it was because the same principles were believed to be at issue. Once more the same cause had taken hold of the heart and conscience of Scotland, and that with a force in many cases so overpowering as to set all obstacles at defiance. This, as we shall see, was the reason why the movement became one which the people to so large an extent took into their own hands, and carried out independently of the ministers.

But while the revival of religious life prepared men for the sacrifice, it yet made the Disruption more painful, in so far as it broke up many of those parochial and home mission operations into which they had thrown themselves. There are many published biographies which are full of the details of such work, but one or two examples taken from the Disruption Mss. may serve further to illustrate what was going on.

In 1820 the Rev. George Davidson was ordained at Latheron, Caithness, and found himself the minister of a parish covering 350 square miles, with 8000 of a population. For several years he was in the habit of preaching four sermons and travelling twenty miles every Sabbath. The labour, he quietly remarks, "was perhaps greater than could long have been borne;" and he was much concerned as to how adequate provision could be made for the parish. A plan of church extension was devised, and vigorously carried out, in no small measure on his own pecuniary responsibility. Sir John Sinclair, he mentions, in a

most liberal way gave his assistance, and, he adds, "I received great encouragement, and afterwards aid, from the eminent Dr. Chalmers. . . . I sent him the sketch of a plan by which I proposed to divide this large parish, extending nearly thirty miles along the sea coast, into manageable districts, five in number." How this object was attained he records, and the result was that "the year 1843 found the parish possessed of five distinct and regularly organised congregations, having each its own minister, elders, teachers, and communicants."

There is a touch of sadness when he comes to speak of the way in which this work was cut short. In 1842 he was busy with the last of these churches—that of Dunbeath—when "a serious obstacle presented itself; for the Church question, which was for several years depending before the Civil Courts, had just assumed a rather alarming aspect, and warned us to cease from building." For long this devoted man had toiled to make full provision for the religious wants of his parish. The last stone was about to be laid on the structure, and he went to Edinburgh in May, 1843, "almost hoping against hope—scarcely believing that the Government of the country would have been so infatuated as to hazard the breaking up of the Establishment, and that some relief would be afforded to save the consciences of the evangelical party, at least at the eleventh hour." * How vain was that hope he was destined soon to learn.

Beside this example from the far North, we may place the experience of Dr. Roxburgh, then at Dundee. He had been licensed in 1831, at the time "when Dr. Chalmers' labours in the cause of Church extension had fired the young preachers of the Church with a portion of his enthusiasm." He was "one of six probationers who tendered their services to the parish ministers [of Glasgow] to aid them in the supervision of the neglected and overgrown population." To Dr. Roxburgh was assigned the Cowcaddens, then one of the worst localities in the city, where he met with signal success. "He used to pride himself on being the first parochial missionary in the Church of Scotland." While acting as assistant in St. George's, Edinburgh, he "became personally acquainted with Dr. Chalmers, with whom he had much

* Dis. Mss., Parish of Latheron, pp. 2, 3.

congenial intercourse." Accordingly, on being settled in Dundee in 1834, his first effort was in the direction of Church extension. "Finding himself burdened with the oversight of a population of about 9000 souls, in addition to the families of his flock, he forthwith set himself to have a church erected in the west end of his parish. To this Mr. M'Cheyne was appointed, with whom, until the day of his death, he lived in habits of almost daily and most cordial co-operation. The Presbytery of Dundee (2nd August, 1837), having formed an association in aid of Church extension generally, and especially within their own bounds, appointed Dr. Roxburgh convener, and Mr. M'Cheyne secretary. . . . The town and parish were mapped out into districts of such extent and population as appeared to form a suitable parochial charge. . . . And in a short time the erections of Dudhope and Wallacetown Churches in some measure rewarded the efforts of the association." Steps, indeed, were taken towards a wider circle of operation by means of an association for the county. "But the time was now at hand when all these and other promising efforts for the religious and educational well-being of the country began to be paralysed, and were ultimately brought to a stand, through the infatuated conduct of the Government in resisting the righteous claims of the Church. From the first, Mr. Roxburgh was an ardent defender of the Church's spiritual independence and the rights of the Christian people. In maintaining the controversy in which these high interests were involved, he greatly valued the aid derived from the earnest spiritual pleadings, both in the Presbytery and in public, of his friend and brother, Mr. M'Cheyne, whose devout mind deeply felt how much the interests of vital godliness were concerned in the preservation of the principles for which the Church was contending." *

Examples such as these, which it would be easy to multiply, will give some idea of the kind of work that was being done, and of the hopeful prospects which the Established Church then had before her.

And how, then, was it that men in this state of mind, and zealously engaged in such work, came to abandon their position

* Rev. Dr. Roxburgh, Parker Mss.

within the Establishment, and to face all the sacrifices of the Disruption? The question has often been asked, and the answer simply is, that they were constrained by the successive attacks of the patrons, and the encroachments of the Civil Courts. The minds both of ministers and people were gradually awakened by the progress of events. The sacred principles involved became from time to time clear, in view of what was actually taking place. Step by step—one step at a time—the path of duty was made plain, and it was thus by the hand of God Himself, in the leadings of His Providence, that the Church was made ready for the final crisis.

Various allusions to this preparatory process occur in the Disruption Mss. "As the battle became hotter," Mr. Mackenzie, of Farr, states, "I found the concern for the prosperity of Christ's cause was getting stronger, especially among the serious and godly. . . . I had frequent demands upon me for communicating in their own language [the Gaelic] information regarding the causes and progress of the struggle. While thus preparing to gratify their anxiety, and give them correct information, . . . I obtained a closer and more intimate acquaintance with the subjects for my own satisfaction, so that endeavouring to instruct my people in this remote locality, additional light was darting daily on my own mind as to the line of my duty should the State carry matters so far as they ultimately did." *

At Collace, Dr. A. Bonar speaks of the weekly prayer meeting, at which, "as the events of our Church's history became more and more solemnising, we used to speak of them and pray over them. This prepared the people in some measure for the events that followed." †

So far as the ministrations of the pulpit were concerned, there seems to have been little of what has been called preaching to the times, but as public attention was more and more roused, it became impossible to avoid all reference to passing events. For the most part this seems to have been quietly and calmly done, as in the case of Dr. Lorimer, of Glasgow. "In regard to preparations for the Disruption, I am disposed to account the circumstance of my having for some time before been lecturing

* Dis. Mss. xx. p. 2. † Dis. Mss. xxi. p. 1.

through the Acts of the Apostles as useful to myself and congregation in the prospect. Thus the essential principles of a Church of Christ, the heroic spirit of the early Apostles and teachers, in contending with the encroachments of civil authority, and various important lessons for the ministers and people, were brought out in a quiet way, without any *direct* allusion to our own great controversy. The hearers, I have no doubt, saw and made the application for themselves." *

In other cases the reference was more distinctly stated. Mr. Thomson, of Muckhart, as clerk of the Presbytery of Auchterarder, was from the first in the thick of the fight. Yet, "personally," he says, "strife and dissension was always something from which I shrank—over-sensitively shrank. While some of my brethren had held meeting after meeting, . . . I had contented myself with merely circulating tracts. This state of matters had continued till near the end of 1842, when, for the greater part of a week, I could fix on no subject on which I might discourse to my people on the Sabbath. I turned over in my mind text after text, but I felt that I could not break ground at all. Friday passed over, and it was still the same. Saturday forenoon passed, . . . until about seven o'clock in the evening, and I was concluding that I must take up some old sermon, which I was very unwilling to do. . . . In these circumstances, in almost hopelessly turning over the Bible, the book of Daniel opened before me, and it occurred to me that even yet I might obtain some fresh and profitable materials in Daniel's conduct. . . . The subject with great rapidity opened itself before me with an unusual vividness; and (to me) in an incredibly short space of time, the whole materials of the discourse were collected and arranged. I saw it was to lead me to a full explanation of our position, duty, and prospects, whether as office-bearers or as individuals, in reference to our present difficulties. I was disposed to shrink from it. I felt, however, completely shut up to it, and was impressed with the feeling that it was the call of God; and after some little struggle at thus throwing myself into the field of controversy, I proceeded with the preparation of the discourse. I was led, *first*,

* Dis. Mss. i. p. 2.

to advert to the snare or temptation in the way of the prophet, to obey man rather than God, or evil, apparently, would be the consequence: the loss of station, power, influence—ruin, utter ruin; *secondly*, his conduct under temptation—calmly, resolutely, without hedging, without hesitation, without hankering, doing his duty; and *thirdly*, the consequences that resulted from the line of conduct he followed—the trial not altogether averted—the triumphant issue out of it—the ruin brought on his enemies, and, ultimately, the declarative glory of God greatly promoted. All this I was led to apply to the circumstances of the Church with considerable enlargement and solemnity of mind, and never, perhaps, did I see my people more solemnised and deeply impressed. From that time, I believe, may be dated the determination of many of them to cast in their lot with us." *

* Dis. Mss. xxviii. pp. 3-5.

III. Non-Intrusion Conflict.

Here it may be right to recount briefly the leading events of the conflict, and to point out the great principles which came to be involved.

In 1834, the Church resolved that her Christian people should have an effective voice in the calling of their pastors. On every vacancy the wishes of the congregations were to be effectually considered. This had, indeed, from the first, been the principle of the Church of Scotland, and it was still part of her constitution, according to the opinion of the highest legal authorities who were consulted, among others the Crown lawyers for the time. And so the Act on Calls—the Veto Act—was passed by the Church in the full belief that it was in accordance with the mind of Christ, was legally within her powers,*

* The highest legal authorities in England were as decided as those in Scotland. The day after the Veto Act was passed, Lord Campbell (then Sir John Campbell) addressed a meeting in Edinburgh, and gave his opinion in explicit terms: "I rejoice to think that not many hours since a law has gone forth from the General Assembly which may have, under the blessing of Providence, the effect of reforming the Church of Scotland, and bringing it back to the standard of its former purity, and removing from it every objection and complaint. By a majority of 46 last night Lord Moncreiff's motion was carried."—Quoted in *Witness*. 13th April, 1842. A few weeks afterwards Lord Brougham, in the House of Lords, took occasion to say: "The late proceedings in the General Assembly have done more to facilitate the adoption of measures which shall set that important question [Patronage] at rest, upon a footing advantageous to the community, and that shall be safe and beneficial to the Establishment, and in every respect desirable, than any other course that could have been taken."—*Mirror of Parliament*. These statements are not quoted here for the purpose of comparing what the learned Lords

and would conduce to the best interests of the people. Unacceptable ministers were no longer to be thrust on unwilling congregations.

It was in the autumn of that same year (1834), that the important parish of Auchterarder, pleasantly situated at the foot of the Ochils, became vacant, and Lord Kinnoul, the patron, on the 14th of October, presented to the living, Mr. Robert Young, a preacher of the Gospel. The people had the usual opportunity of testing his ministerial qualifications, but their opinion was so adverse, that out of a population of 3000, only two individuals, Michael Tod and Peter Clark, could be found to express approbation by signing the call. Five-sixths of the congregation, on the other hand, came forward solemnly to protest against his settlement. The Church, accordingly, found that they could not proceed to his ordination at Auchterarder, and the patron was requested to make another appointment.

Unfortunately, this was not done. Lord Kinnoul and his presentee resolved to carry the case into the Civil Courts, and after the usual preliminary delays, the pleadings began in November, 1837. On the 8th of March, the sentence of the Court was pronounced adverse to the Church and the Christian people. It was decreed that in the settlement of pastors the Church must have no regard to the feelings of the congregation. The trials of the presentee must be proceeded with in order to ordination, just as if the refusal of the people had not been given.

To ward off, if possible, from the Established Church the consequences of this decision, the case was appealed to the House of Lords, where the pleadings were heard in March, 1839, and the decision given on 2nd May of that year. The sentence of the Scottish Court was confirmed. The wishes of Christian congregations were to be considered of no value in any way, and Lord Brougham, in order to make his meaning

then *said* with what they afterwards *did*—though, certainly, the contrast is sufficiently striking. The reader is merely asked to observe what good reason the Church had to believe that the Veto Act was within her competency when such authorities were so profuse in their congratulations, without once hinting a doubt as to the legality of the course that had been taken.

plain, introduced a simile which attracted much attention in Scotland. Alluding to the fact that when the Sovereign of Britain is crowned in Westminster Abbey, one of the coronation ceremonies is the appearance of a champion on horseback, his Lordship remarked that as no one could suppose that the recalcitration of the champion's horse could invalidate the act of coronation, so the protest of a reluctant congregation against an unacceptable presentee would be equally unavailing. The solemnly declared judgment of a Christian congregation would have as little value as the kick of the champion's horse.

Such a decision, so explained, was sufficiently startling; but as if to make the matter yet more plain, the case of Auchterarder was followed by those of Lethendy and Marnoch.*

At Lethendy the people had rejected Mr. Clark, the presentee, an unhappy man, who subsequently gave himself up to drunkenness. The patron and the Presbytery had agreed to settle, and actually did settle, another preacher in the pastoral charge; but Mr. Clark dragged the Presbytery into the Court of Session, when certain proceedings took place to which we shall afterwards refer.

The case of Marnoch, Strathbogie, deserves special attention. It was in 1837 that the vacancy occurred, and Mr. Edwards, a preacher of the Gospel, was presented to the living. For three years he had officiated in the church as assistant to the former minister, and the parishioners knew him only too well—so well, that only one man, Peter Taylor, the innkeeper, signed his call, while six-sevenths of the congregation actively opposed, his settlement. In May, 1838, he was set aside by the Church.

As in the former cases, Mr. Edwards appealed to the Civil Courts, and in June, 1839, a decision was given to the same effect as before. No regard was to be had to any opinions or feelings of the parishioners.

* It must not be inferred from these cases that the veto was often exercised. Patrons, for the most part, were careful; and of the 150 vacancies which took place during the five years following 1834, it is stated that there were about 140 where the settlements were harmonious. Even the adversaries of the law began to praise it. The people were not willing generally to object, unless the reasons were supposed to be strong.

THE INTRUSION AT MARNOCH.

At Marnoch, however, a new feature came into view. The majority of the Presbytery belonged to that party of Moderates in the Church who agreed with the Civil Courts in wishing to retain the power of intruding presentees on unwilling congregations; and so, when the Court of Session ordered the settlement of Mr. Edwards to go forward, they readily lent themselves to the work. The supreme Courts of the Church were obliged to interfere, and this they did in the most decisive way. At the rising of the Assembly in 1839, the Commission of that Court expressly prohibited the Presbytery of Strathbogie from taking any steps towards the settlement of Mr. Edwards. It soon appeared, however, that the majority of that Court were resolved to ignore the prohibition; and this having been formally brought before the Commission at its next meeting, the Moderate majority of the Presbytery were suspended from their office as ministers of the Church, and prohibited from all acts, ministerial or judicial. This was done because they would give no promise to refrain from the intrusion of Mr. Edwards, and because the Church was resolved to protect the people from such intrusion.

It might have been expected that ministers of the Gospel, who had at their ordination vowed obedience to their ecclesiastical superiors, would have respected their vows. But their desire to obey the Court of Session, and carry out the forced settlement, prevailed. In breach of their sacred engagements, they resolved to meet at Marnoch on the 21st of January, 1841; and the striking scene which then took place will not soon be forgotten.

The snows of mid-winter lay deep on the ground, but when the seven Strathbogie ministers met at the church, 2000 people were gathered around and within it. No sooner had the pretended Presbytery taken their places than a solemn protest was handed in by the parishioners against the deed that was about to be done. "We earnestly beg you . . . to avoid the desecration of the ordinance of ordination under the circumstances; but if you shall disregard this representation, we do solemnly, and as in the presence of the great and only Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, repudiate and dis-

own the pretended ordination of Mr. Edwards, and his pretended settlement as minister of Marnoch. We deliberately declare that, if such proceedings could have any effect, they must involve the most heinous guilt and fearful responsibility in reference to the dishonour done to religion, and the cruel injury to the spiritual interests of a united Christian congregation." Having delivered this protest, it was intimated the people would leave them to force a minister on the parish, with scarcely one of the parishioners to witness the deed.

"The scene that followed was indeed touching and impressive. In a body the parishioners rose, and, gathering up the Bibles" which some of them had been wont to leave, for long years, from Sabbath to Sabbath in the pews, they silently retired. "The deep emotion that prevailed among them was visible in the tears which might be seen trickling down many an old man's cheek, and in the flush, more of sorrow than of anger, that reddened many a younger man's brow. 'We never witnessed,' said an onlooker,* 'a scene bearing the slightest resemblance to this protest of the people, or approaching in the slightest degree to the moral beauty of their withdrawal; for, stern though its features were, they were also sublime. No word of disrespect or reproach escaped them; they went away in a strong conviction that their cause was with the Most Powerful, and that with Him rested the redress of all their wrong. Even the callous-hearted people that sat in the pew, the only pew representing *intrusionism* and forced settlements, were moved—they were awed; and the hearts of some of them appeared to give way. "Will they all leave?" we heard some of them whispering. *Yes; they all left, never to return* until the temple is purified again, and the buyers and sellers—the traffickers in religion—are driven from the house of God. THEY ALL LEFT.'"†

In this way it was that the course of events did more than anything else to open men's eyes to the great principle of Non-intrusion. During the whole of the Church's history it had been held that the call of the people was essential before a

* Mr. Troup, of the *Aberdeen Banner* newspaper.

† Ten Years' Conflict, ii. 198.

minister could be settled. The congregation must invite before the Presbytery could ordain. Here were cases, however, one after another, in which the parishioners were virtually unanimous in their opposition to the presentee. Was the call, then, to be treated as a mockery? Were the Michael Tods and the Peter Taylors of Scotland to overbear the whole Christian people of united parishes? Was it to be tolerated that the members of Christian congregations must submit to have obnoxious presentees forced on them? Surely it is not to be wondered at that so large a body of the ministers and members of the Church should have felt that these proceedings could not be in accordance with the mind of Christ, and should have determined that in such settlements they must at all hazards refuse to take part.

IV. Struggle for Spiritual Independence.

At this point, however, there came into the field the still more formidable question of Spiritual Independence, which was destined to act with such decisive effect on the issues of the conflict. As Spiritual Independence is the distinctive principle on which the Free Church has taken her stand before the country, it is right that we should retrace the course of events, and mark the steps by which the great truth on this subject was brought into prominence.

But there is one general explanation which seems to be called for at the outset. Many persons object altogether to Church Establishments on the ground that if the Church accept the pay of the State, she must, in some degree, yield her spiritual authority to be controlled by the State. On behalf of the Church of Scotland this was all along resolutely denied. The Church, though allied to the State, was in this honourable position, that she had the aid and support of Government in all Christian work, while she retained her uncontrolled spiritual freedom, and independence of action. This view Dr. Chalmers proclaimed in London, amid the universal applause of all our leading public men, both in Church and State, so late as 1838. "It should never be forgotten, that in things ecclesiastical, the highest power of our Church is amenable to no higher power on earth for its decisions. It can exclude, it can deprive, it can depose, at pleasure. External force might make an obnoxious individual the holder of a benefice, but there is no external force in these realms that could make him a minister of the Church of Scotland. There is nothing which the State can do to our independent and indestructible Church, but strip her of her temporalities: *nec tamen consumebatur:* she would remain a Church notwithstanding, as strong as ever in the props of her

own moral and inherent greatness. And though shrivelled in all her dimensions, by the moral injury inflicted on many thousands of families, she would be at least as strong as ever in the reverence of her country's population. She was as much a Church in her days of suffering as in her days of outward security and triumph—when a wandering outcast with nothing but the mountain breezes to play around her, and nought but the caves of the earth to shelter her—as now when admitted to the bowers of an Establishment. The magistrate might withdraw his protection, and she cease to be an Establishment any longer, but, in all the high matters of sacred and spiritual jurisdiction, she would be the same as before. With or without an Establishment, she, in these, is the unfettered mistress of her doings. The King, by himself or his representative, might be the spectator of our proceedings, but what Lord Chatham said of the poor man's house is true in all its parts of the Church to which I have the honour to belong: 'In England every man's house is his castle.' Not that it is surrounded with walls and battlements, it may be a straw-built shed. Every wind of heaven may whistle round it, every element of heaven may enter it; but the king cannot—the king dare not." *

Now, what really brought about the Disruption was the fact that the civil authorities of the country adopted and enforced the opposite view, holding, with those advocates of disestablishment, that Government connection infers civil control over the Church in her own proper functions. At the very crisis of the contest, on the 11th of August, 1842, Lord Campbell, in the

* Nine bishops of the Church of England attended the lecture from which the above extract is taken. An American traveller—the Rev. Dr. Clark—who was present, dwells with delight on the sight of so many dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, &c., in the audience. Dr. Chalmers was seated at a table while reading the lecture, but at the more emphatic passages he rose to his feet, the audience in their enthusiasm rising with him, "waving their hats above their heads, and breaking into tumultuous approbation." Dr. Begg was beside him on the platform, and states that in delivering the above passage, the words, "the king cannot—the king dare not," were uttered in accents of prophetic vehemence . . . and were responded to by a whirlwind of enthusiasm, which was probably never exceeded in the history of eloquence.—Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers, iv. 38, 39.

House of Lords, spoke the mind of the Judges :* "While the appellants remain members of the Establishment, they are, in addition to their sacred character, public functionaries appointed and paid by the State ; and they must perform the duties which the law of the land imposes upon them. It is only a voluntary body, such as the Relief or Burgher Church in Scotland, self-founded and self-supported, that can say they will be entirely governed by their own rules."†

No less clearly did Sir Robert Peel state the views held at the time by the statesmen of the country in the year following the Disruption : "I think it of the greatest importance that the *spiritual* authority of the Church should be restrained, as it is restrained and made *subordinate* to Parliament."

These statements were not the mere unguarded utterances of the moment ; they really embodied a theory definitely held, and carried out, as the only theory on which the Church of Scotland could be continued as an Establishment. But how utterly repugnant such views were both to the ministers and laymen of our country need not be said. They held, as their fathers had done, that no Church had the right, for any earthly consideration, to barter away that sacred authority in things spiritual which Christ had given her in trust, and which she must retain and administer as responsible to Him alone.

What brought these opposite views into conflict was the question as to forming the pastoral tie in such cases as Auchterarder. When the Judges decided, as we have seen, that unacceptable ministers must be forced on unwilling parishes, it followed that the Church must ordain them, for not otherwise could they get the living. The views of the court therefore were decided. The Church must go on to examine Mr. Young with a view to his settlement—*i.e.*, his ordination. The Church replied, that she had already ascertained there was a fatal bar to ordination. It was in vain that the Lords of Session decreed the refusal of the people to be no obstacle. The Church held

* *Witness* Newspaper, 13th August, 1842.

† It ought to be observed that this view of the freedom of Nonconformist Churches is *practically* the same with that which was adopted by the Court of Session in *finally* deciding the Cardross Case, in 1863.

that to ordain a minister over a congregation who refused him would be to desecrate the ordinance and sin against the mind of Christ.

And what, then, was to be done? At once the question arose —HAD THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, BECAUSE ESTABLISHED, LOST THE RIGHT TO BE GUIDED BY HER OWN CONSCIENTIOUS CONVICTIONS ON A MATTER SO OBVIOUSLY SPIRITUAL AS THE FORMING OF THE PASTORAL TIE? Men stood forth at once to repudiate the idea. The Spiritual Independence of the Church was proclaimed. The fact was appealed to, that in her Standards, ratified by the State, it was written as plainly as words could express it, that the Church Courts were supreme in things spiritual, as surely as the Civil Courts in things civil. The sole Headship of Christ, His Crown-rights as Redeemer, the duty of undivided allegiance to Him, became the watchwords of a momentous struggle. But though the point at issue thus inevitably involved questions of the deepest sacredness, yet the matter itself was plain and simple. Were the Civil Courts, on account of the stipend, entitled to put a force on the conscience of the Church in such a thing as the forming of the pastoral tie? Must she, at their bidding, break through what she held to be the law of her Divine Master? Unlike the Church of Rome, she made no claim to infallibility—only that, having done her best to ascertain her duty to Christ, she must be allowed, in this spiritual matter, faithfully to follow out her convictions. Unlike the Church of Rome, she pretended to no right to impose her views on the Civil Courts, or to interfere with their independent jurisdiction. It lay with them to judge and dispose of all civil interests which might be involved. But the responsibility of things spiritual, which she had herself to carry out, must be left in her hands.

This was the whole claim of the Church to Spiritual Independence; and surely it is not to be wondered at if men held that no secular judge ought to have the power to force the conscience of the Church in things spiritual.

To the sacredness of this principle the Scottish mind has all along from of old been keenly alive. It surprised Bishop Burnet and his friends to find in Scotland "a poor commonalty

capable to argue upon points of government, and on the bounds to be set to the power of princes in matters of religion." It has astonished many a reader to find Andrew Melville, in the previous century, at the Scottish Court, boldly confronting his sovereign with the declaration: "I must tell you there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland: there is King James, the head of this commonwealth; and there is Christ Jesus, the Head of the Church, whose subject James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom he is not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member." Of our martyrs not a few suffered imprisonment and death with that very confession on their lips. And here, amidst the keen contendings of the Ten Years' Conflict, the same truth was once more coming to the front, and that with such resistless power as ultimately at the Disruption to rend asunder Church and State.*

With this general explanation, we return to the course of events; for it was only by the hard logic of actual facts that, step by step, the truth as to spiritual independence was brought up and forced anew practically on the mind of the Church.

So early as 1838 there were signs of what was coming. In deciding the Auchterarder case, not only had it been broadly stated from the bench that the Church of Scotland was the *creature of the State,* but the general principles of law on which the Court proceeded were felt to have struck a heavy blow at her spiritual liberties. Men took alarm. Within two months the General Assembly was to meet; and at once, from all parts of the country, overtures were sent up calling on that Court to stand firm. And very remarkably was that appeal responded to, when Dr. R. Buchanan presented himself on the floor of the

* It may be worth while to give a sentence from John Welsh, of Ayr, the son-in-law of John Knox. From his prison at Blackness he wrote the Countess of Wigton, in 1605: "These two points—*first, That Christ is the Head of His Church; secondly, That she is free in her government from all other jurisdiction except Christ's*—these two points, I say, are the special cause of our imprisonment, being now convicted as traitors for the maintaining thereof."—History of Mr. John Welsh, Wodrow Soc. Select Biographies, vol. i. p. 23. What else than this did the Free Church assign in 1843 as the ground of the Disruption?

Assembly to move the Independence Resolutions, and take his destined place in the councils of the Church. "Spiritual independence," he showed, "was familiar to the mind of Scotland, inscribed not unfrequently, in characters of blood, on many of the brightest and most memorable pages of our ecclesiastical history. Like some ancient banner which had been borne in triumph through many a hard-fought field, it hung, honoured and venerated, within our Church's armoury." But there were indications that the time had come when we should be "shaking the dust from its folds, and flinging it again abroad to the winds of heaven." Thus the memorable debate of 23rd May was opened, and it ended in a resolution giving no uncertain sound. By a decisive majority the Assembly declared that the supremacy and sole headship of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the spiritual jurisdiction which depends thereon, "they will assert, and at all hazards defend, by the help and blessing of that great God who in the days of old enabled their fathers, amid manifold persecutions, to maintain a testimony even to the death for Christ's kingdom and crown."

During the year which followed, the House of Lords (May, 1839) gave their decision, already referred to, in the Auchterarder case; and on that occasion there had been some remarkably plain speaking. Sir Frederick Pollock, counsel for the Church, had thought it right to intimate to their Lordships that if their decision were adverse, it could not be complied with in its spiritual effects; and Lord Brougham, when decree was pronounced, referred to this statement: "My Lords, it is indecent to suppose any such case. You might as well suppose that Doctors' Commons would refuse to attend to a prohibition from the Court of Queen's Bench; you might as well suppose that the Court of Session, when you remit a cause with orders to alter the judgment, would refuse to alter it." His Lordship, like all who hold Erastian views, had forgot the difference between the civil and the spiritual, the allegiance due to Cæsar and the allegiance due to God.

Within a fortnight, however, the General Assembly again met, and that distinction was held forth before the country by one to whom all men gave heed. A resolution, moved by Dr.

Chalmers, was passed by a triumphant majority, pledging the Church implicitly to obey the Civil Courts in all matters of civil interest, but firmly refusing their control in things spiritual.

A collision was now inevitable. The Church would loyally support the authority of the judges in their own civil department, but in a spiritual matter like the settlement of a pastor—*i.e.*, ordination—she could bow to no authority but the law of her Lord. In the years that followed, it was in vain that this position was assailed from the bench by decision after decision, and interdict after interdict. The Church had taken her ground, and with unswerving fidelity, amid conflicts and sacrifices, she was enabled to hold it to the end.

The first testing case was that of Lethendy, where the Presbytery of Dunkeld found themselves within the grasp of the Court of Session, and placed as culprits at the bar. Mr. Clark, the presentee, as already stated, had proved unacceptable to the people, owing to his preaching, and for other reasons. He had been set aside, and the patron had presented another in his room, Mr. Kessen, whom the people welcomed, and the Presbytery were preparing to ordain. Meanwhile, Mr. Clark stepped forward to claim what he called his rights, applied to the civil judges, and obtained an interdict prohibiting the Presbytery from proceeding to ordain Mr. Kessen. In consequence of this, the Church resolved to abandon all claim to the fruits of the benefice, leaving these to be disposed of between Mr. Clark and other parties as the civil judges might think right; but in regard to ordination to the cure of souls, that was a spiritual matter which the Church was bound to care for. The interdict was disregarded, and Mr. Kessen ordained.

No sooner had this been done than a summons was issued against the Presbytery, and they were brought to the bar of the Civil Court, June 14, 1839. The scene has been depicted by the hand of Hugh Miller:—"In front, elevated on their bench, clothed in their robes of human authority, and invested with the stern *insignia* of human power, sat the judges, twelve in number. Opposite stood another Court—the Court of Christ—called to their bar for executing the spiritual functions conferred by the Lord Jesus on His Church. . . . With a demeanour

touching from its perfect simplicity, which indeed characterised the bearing of them all, the Rev. Mr. Stirling, of Cargill, the senior minister, read a statement," to the effect that they appeared in obedience to the citation, because they were deeply impressed with the obligation of giving all honour and reverence to the judges of the land ; disclaiming any intention of disrespect to the Court in what they have done. But in ordaining to the office of the holy ministry, and in admitting to the pastoral charge, to which, in their proceedings complained of, they had strictly limited themselves, they acted in obedience to the superior Church judicatory, to which, in matters spiritual, they were subordinate, and to which at ordination they had vowed obedience. "It is commonly understood that five of the judges voted in favour of the sentence of imprisonment, and six for the more lenient measure of rebuke, and that the Lord President did not vote at all."

They were accordingly rebuked in terms as strong as the Court could well employ, and a distinct intimation given, that should any breach of interdict again occur, the offenders would inevitably be sent to prison. How little effect this threat produced was soon to be seen. But in the meantime legal proceedings of another kind were taken. An action was raised by Mr. Clark, and the Presbytery were cast in damages and expenses to the extent of several thousand pounds. And so the first case of conflict came to an end—the Church making good her object in shielding and caring for the spiritual interests of her people, while the Court of Session had shown their power not only in rebukes and threats of imprisonment, but in fines so heavy that, looking to the income of Presbyterian ministers, they might, if help had not been contributed by friends, have proved oppressive and ruinous.

Far more formidable, however, was the next case of collision arising out of the settlement at Marnoch. We saw how, amid the snows of winter, the seven ministers of Strathbogie had ordained Mr. Edwards, and forced him on the parish. Expressly to prevent this, the Church had suspended them from the office of the ministry and all its sacred functions ; and hence it followed that other ministers had to be sent to preach and dispense

ordinances to the parishioners. Here, again, to the amazement of many, the Court of Session interposed by an interdict, making it an offence for ministers to preach the Gospel in those seven parishes. Such assumption of spiritual authority by civil judges was a new thing in Scotland since the days of the Stuarts. It had been believed that at common law there was freedom for any minister of any denomination in any part of the country to preach the Gospel to those who chose to hear him ; and men opened their eyes when the Court of Session were found laying the Word and ordinances of God under civil interdict.

On the part of the ministers so prohibited there was, of course, only one thing to be done, and this has been well described by Dr. Guthrie, one of the first on whom the prohibition fell:— "In going to preach in Strathbogie," he said, "I was met by an interdict from the Court of Session—an interdict to which as regards civil matters, I gave implicit obedience. On the Lord's day, when I was preparing for divine service, in came the servant of the law, and handed me an interdict. I told him he had done his duty, and I would do mine. The interdict forbade me, under penalty of the Calton Jail, to preach in the parish churches of Strathbogie. I said, The parish churches are stone and lime, and belong to the State ; I will not intrude there. It forbade me to preach the Gospel in the school-houses. I said, The school-houses are stone and lime, and belong to the State; I will not intrude there. It forbade me to preach in the churchyard. I said, The dust of the dead is the State's ; I will not intrude there. But when the Lords of Session forbade me to preach my Master's blessed Gospel and offer salvation to sinners anywhere in that district under the arch of heaven, I put the interdict under my feet, and I preached the Gospel." *

The effect of this on the surrounding district was very great. "I recollect," says Mr. Dewar, of Fochabers, "the Sabbath morning when the interdict was served on Dr. Guthrie in Fife-Keith. I called at his lodgings on my way from Botriphnie to preach to my own congregation. During the short time I was in the room a messenger was sent to him by some person

* Memoir of Dr. Guthrie, vol. ii. p. 18.

who wished to see him. He returned immediately, held up the interdict in his hands, and I shall never forget the indignation that flashed in his eye while he exclaimed, 'No interdict shall prevent me from preaching the blessed Gospel of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' . . . He preached that week, night after night, to crowded audiences in several parishes in Strathbogie. There was intense excitement when, at the conclusion of his discourses, he held up the interdict, and declared that at all hazards, and whatever the consequence might be, he would proclaim the everlasting Gospel to his fellow-men." *

The whole district of Strathbogie was at that time in a state which none who witnessed it can ever forget, and the effects were felt all over Scotland. As time went on the ministerial supplies had to be drawn from all different quarters of the Church. And it naturally followed that, as the ministers went down, a feeling of personal concern was roused in their congregations, and spread from parish to parish, when they knew that a threat of imprisonment was hanging over their pastor.

This was seen, for example, at Ruthwell, on the extreme south of Scotland, when the venerable Dr. Duncan, then Moderator of the General Assembly, went north to Strathbogie. During the earlier stages of the Church conflict his people had been somewhat apathetic. "The first incident that seemed really to pierce the heart of the parish was when" he "was invited to proceed to Strathbogie to supply for a time one or two of the parishes whose ministers had been, for contumacy, suspended. The emotion and anxiety were very great, for they understood that he went, having professed his willingness, if interdicted, to pay the forfeit of disobedience, though it should be imprisonment. . . . When, instead of any such extreme measure, they learned that the legal officer, who followed him to a country inn, was so ashamed of his mission that he could hardly muster courage to execute it; † and that in all places he found a hungering after the good news of salvation, we were all filled

* Dis. Mss. xliv. p. 4, Rev. D. Dewar.

† "The act was performed with downcast looks and stammered apologies, as by one ashamed of his office."—Memoir of Dr. H. Duncan, p. 274.

with a lively joy. . . . He himself was never more refreshed in his ministry than by his visit to that enlivened region. . . . When he came home to Ruthwell his lively prayers and interesting narratives of the state of souls in Strathbogie refreshed us all." *

The reader, however, will best understand the experience of the ministers who were engaged in this service by our giving the narrative of Mr. Wood, of Elie, then of Westruther. He had travelled north over night, and after arriving at Huntly, he says: "I was engaged with my toilet, when a gentleman was announced, who introduced himself as ——; and almost the very first words he spake were: 'Have you got your name on your luggage? Excuse me,' he added, seeing that I was somewhat startled by his salutation, 'but there is no need that you should assist the officers in finding out your name.' The only article of my luggage which bore my name was a hat-box, which I produced, and this he immediately took in charge. Having completed my toilet, I rejoined ——, who took me across to his own house. . . . 'You must understand,' said he, as we crossed the street, 'there are two inns. The one out of which we have come is the Non-intrusion, and that other one is the Moderate inn. And there,' pointing to an individual in a shabby black coat, the pockets of which were evidently distended by papers, who was pacing up and down on the flagstones, 'there is the messenger-at-arms waiting to serve the interdicts. You have no idea,' he added, 'of the length to which the Moderates are going, in order to obtain the names of the ministers. We found our servant-girl listening at the back of the door of our sitting-room for this purpose. No doubt she was bribed.' . . .

"I dined at the inn with Dr. Duncan, of Ruthwell, who was returning from a fortnight's visit to one of the parishes, and who gave me some very interesting details of the religious awakening which seemed to have visited them.

"—— had given me directions how to proceed to my destination. The inn pony was brought to the door, and when asked where I was going, in order to fill up the duty ticket, I told them to the country, according to arrangement. I then waited

* Dis. Mss. xvi. p. 2.

a few minutes till I saw —— on horseback at the foot of the street, and then mounted, and rode after him. Little more than an hour's ride brought us to a farm-house of one storey, consisting of a but and a ben, to the inmates of which, a middle-aged man and his sister, I was introduced as the minister that was to be with them for a fortnight.

"The parish of Cairnie is chiefly upland, and presented several features which were new and strange to me. With the exception of the portion of the high road to Elgin, which ran along the borders of it, I believe there was not a made road in the parish. . . . The harvest was got in upon sleds—*i.e.*, two long poles trailing behind a horse, and connected by a cross piece. Corn was carried to market, and lime fetched for farm purposes, on horseback. My host was a small farmer, who lived with his sister in a one-storey house—a but and ben, as I have said. They were godly people, connected, I think, with the Independents, but I remember the woman saying that they had sent word to their itinerant minister, 'that he need not come the noo, for they had plenty of Gospel preaching.' The arrangements of the house were of the most primitive kind. . . . No grate of any kind; the turf piled up in a heap on the hearth, which it required some skill to arrange. My kind hostess used to come in in the evening and pile the turf *secundum artem*, and after lingering about the room for a while, she would open the door and call to her brother, 'Are ye no comin' ben to have a crack wi' the minister?' and then they would both come and have a good long talk about many things. My heart was much moved when, years afterwards, I learned that my name was among the last words she spoke before her spirit took its flight for the realms of glory.

"Sunday, the 17th of May, was one of the stormiest days I was ever out in, and well it was that we had the use of a small building erected for a Mason lodge, where I preached to a good congregation from Acts ii. 41, and in the evening from John iii. 3.

"As I by no means intended to spend an idle week at Cairnie, I gathered a meeting of the most responsible men in the neighbourhood, to consider what it might be best to do. They

recommended diets of catechising, and I put all the arrangements into their hands. As a specimen of the work, I shall give an account of the proceedings on Monday. We were to have two meetings that day. A pony was provided for me, and after breakfast I set forth, accompanied by some of the neighbours to guide me to my destination, which was a large barn, belonging to a farm at the distance of a mile. I found it crammed to the very doors, and persons sitting even on the baulks of the roof. I soon got the young people gathered together, and put to them a few questions; but the greater part of the business was a lecture or running commentary of my own.

"Having finished my work in that place, I started, under the direction of my guides, for the place where the second meeting was to be held. As far as I recollect, the distance was about a couple of miles, and our procession was to me both novel and interesting. Some forty or fifty people accompanied me. One group would close round my pony and indulge themselves in conversation for a time, and then, falling back, would give way to another. Then, perhaps, some individual would make his or her way toward me with the words: 'Eh! sir, there's an auld man lying bedrid in yon cot-house, and naebody gangs near him to speak to him about his soul. Would ye no just gang in and see him for a minute or twa?' Of course, the appeal could not be resisted, and the whole crowd stopped at the door, and my pony was held for me till I had gone in and spoken a few words, and prayed with him. This was repeated two or three times in the course of our journey. Our second diet of catechising was just like the first, and need not be particularly described. These meetings were held every day of the week except Friday, which was the day of the fair at Keith, and the most numerously-attended one was on Saturday, when nearly a hundred persons were present.

"I preached again on Sunday, the 24th May, from Job xxvii. 10 in the morning, and from 1 John ii. 15-17 in the afternoon. Next day I left, not having had an interdict served on me, because the messenger who held them had never discovered my name. Nobody in the parish knew it, and I was among them simply as *the* minister that had come for a fortnight. I found

out afterwards that extraordinary pains had been taken to discover it, a person having actually been sent out to find where I had my linen washed; but, as I had a sufficient supply with me, I had no need to employ a washerwoman, and so that plan failed. . . .

"I had been so interested in the parish of Cairnie, that before leaving I had promised to return and dispense the sacrament. Accordingly, I went north by the Aberdeen boat on Tuesday the 28th July. As we approached Aberdeen, an old woman in a red cloak came up to me on the deck. 'Ye'll be ane of the ministers that's gaun to Strathbogie?' said she. I signified that I was. She then told me of the deep interest she took in the whole matter, and her earnest desire to give her aid to the cause in any way that she could. 'An' whaur will ye be ga'in when ye get to Aberdeen, for I'm thinkin' ye'll be a stranger there?' I told her I was a stranger, and had no acquaintances in the city. On which she kindly offered me her hospitality for the night, and took me to her son's house, a Mr. Rodger, one of Dr. M'Crie's people. Next morning I started from Aberdeen, and arrived in due time at Cairnie, where I received a very warm welcome. Thursday was our Fast Day, and I had just finished breakfast, and was preparing to go down to our place of worship, when a messenger-at-arms appeared, accompanied by two witnesses, and served me with an interdict.

"This interdict is now before me, having been carefully bound up with other papers, after having done good service in its day at many a non-intrusion meeting, and I think a sentence or two descriptive of it will not be amiss.

"The document consists of forty-two quarto printed pages, each page signed by John Smith, the messenger-at-arms. It commences with an application to the Court of Session, rehearsing the whole proceedings of the General Assembly of 1840 towards the seven ministers of Strathbogie, and praying their lordships to suspend the resolutions and sentence of the General Assembly, to interdict the minority of the Presbytery, and the special commission appointed by the Assembly to co-operate with them, from acting on the said resolutions and sentence, and especially from appointing ministers or probationers to

preach or administer ordinances in the parishes of the complainers, and to 'interdict, prohibit, and discharge, all presbyteries and all ministers and probationers who by the aforesaid resolutions and sentence may be appointed or called upon to preach and administer ordinances within the parishes of the complainers.' Then follows a 'Statement of Facts,' giving a complete history of the Marnoch case from the date of the vacancy in that parish. It is worthy of notice that it appears from this Statement that the interdict as first granted on 20th December, 1839, was only against intruding into the churches, churchyards, or school-houses, and from using the church-bells; and that it was only on the 14th February that the Court, on a reclaiming petition from the seven ministers, altered the interlocutor of the Lord Ordinary (Murray), which had refused to go farther than the interdict already given, and granted the interdict *as craved*—that is to say, interdicted all ministers and probationers from intruding into the parishes of Strathbogie. This interdict had been before the meeting of the General Assembly, and the 'Statement' goes on to rehearse the whole proceedings of the Assembly, against which a renewal of the interdict was desired. Then follow eleven 'pleas in law.' I recollect that I had some difficulty in discovering from the document what thing it was that was forbidden. The last, or outside page, certainly intimated to me, by name, the 'interlocutor, note of suspension, and interdict, statement of facts, pleas in law, and appendix,' interdicting, prohibiting, and discharging me in terms thereof; but it was not till after some search that I discovered on the 41st page, in smaller type than all the rest of the document, the words: 'Edinburgh, 11th July, 1840. The Lords having advised the note of suspension and interdict, on report of Lord Ivory, pass the note, and grant the interdict as craved. (Signed) C. Hope, I.P.D.' So that the terms thereof were, that I should not preach nor administer ordinances within any of the seven parishes of Strathbogie.

"I put the interdict into my pocket, and walked down to the Mason lodge, where I preached to a large congregation from Zech. xii. 10. After sermon, I exhibited the interdict and

pointed out that though I recognised the authority of the Civil Court in regard to churches, churchyards, and school-houses, I never could acknowledge any right in the Court of Session to prohibit the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, and therefore I had not for one moment hesitated to break it.

"The hall or Mason's lodge being too confined, we resolved to have the sacrament in the open air. A suitable meadow was secured. An immense block of granite with a flat surface was made the head of the table, and posts driven into the ground supported planks, which formed the remainder of the table and the seats. A slight tent was also erected for the protection of the speaker in case of bad weather. On Friday, I walked over to Grange and obtained the assistance of two elders for the Sabbath-day services. Saturday was occupied with divine service, when I preached from 1 John v. 1-3; with conversing with communicants for the first time, of whom there were a good many, and not all of them were young persons; and with completing the arrangements of the tent and tables.

"Sabbath, the 2nd day of August, was the communion Sabbath. The text of the action sermon was Heb. x. 13. I also fenced the tables, served three (the whole number), and gave the concluding address. Mr. Moncur, the probationer, who had by that time been permanently stationed at Cairnie, preached in the evening. The season was a very remarkable, and, as I believe, a profitable one. The people were deeply affected—many of them in tears. A good many grown-up people sat down at the table for the first time. Among these there were a grandmother and granddaughter, who sat side by side. The scene was the occasion of a good deal of curiosity among outsiders. As we came down to the place where we celebrated the communion, we could see the suspended parish minister, with a group around him, scanning the proceedings through a telescope over the wall of the manse garden; and I well remember that, while I was fencing the tables, the mail coach from the north to Aberdeen, passing along the highroad about a furlong off, and probably within reach of my voice, actually pulled up, and stood for about five minutes, the passengers looking with curiosity on

9167

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the strange scene. The services were closed on the Monday with a thanksgiving sermon from Gen. xviii. 19. On Tuesday I left by the mail for Aberdeen. It was blowing a hurricane (we had reason to be thankful that we had had a quiet Sunday), and I recollect that we had to walk the horses very carefully across the long bridge at Inverury, lest we should be blown over."*

It was a strange time in Scotland, when for many months the attention of the whole country was fixed on those seven parishes. A continuous supply of interdicts went down from Edinburgh; they were served on each minister as he arrived—so soon as his name could be ascertained—and invariably, without the least hesitation, they were broken. A state of things such as this was deeply to be regretted—was, indeed, without parallel among a law-abiding and loyal people like those of Scotland since the old persecuting times. But the same vital questions were again being stirred, the old fire was rising. The Civil Court had at last fairly "overshot the mark—it was Erastian over-much." Broken interdicts were shown as common things all over the country, and the remarkable circumstance was, that, notwithstanding the distinct threat of imprisonment held out by the Court, neither the private parties nor the legal authorities ever ventured to put that threatened penalty in force.

Connected with this case, however, there were other and far more serious matters in reserve. At first, it seemed as if the seven ministers had intended to observe their ordination vows. On being suspended, they ceased the exercise of their ministry. But soon there came a change—they presented a formal application to the Civil Court, asking the secular judges to take off the spiritual sentence, and restore them to the exercise of their sacred functions. And this the Court actually professed to do by a formal decree. It was one of the startling decisions of that strange time when the civil judges assumed the power of restoring the sacred functions which the only competent spiritual authorities had taken away. But the grave ecclesiastical offence was not that the judges gave such a decision, but that the Church's own sons, her ordained ministers, should have asked a Civil Court to exercise the power of the keys, so as to set aside

* Dis. Mss. I.

and overbear the spiritual authority which the Church holds from Christ. Had this been submitted to, it is obvious that all spiritual authority was laid prostrate at the feet of the Court of Session. The seven ministers, accordingly, for this offence, were put on trial. Slowly and reluctantly their case was gone into by the Church, as may be seen at various stages of the procedure. Every effort was made to prevail on them, as brethren, to withdraw from a position so false. The case was most painful in itself, and in the results to which it pointed. But, ultimately, all efforts to ward off the final issue were unavailing, and in the Assembly of 1841 they were deposed from the office of the ministry.

There is only one more of these leading cases requiring briefly to be noticed—that of Stewarton, which arose in 1840, though not decided till January, 1843. It had much to do with forcing on the Disruption.

The parish of Stewarton, in Ayrshire, was extensive and populous, and the Presbytery, anxious for the spiritual welfare of the people, proposed to have a portion of it attached *quoad sacra* to a Chapel of Ease, and put under the charge of an additional minister and kirk-session. Six years before, the Church, following many unchallenged precedents in her own history, had raised such chapels into *quoad sacra* parishes, leaving all civil interests connected with the old parochial arrangements unaffected, the only result being that the ministers were rendered truly Presbyterian, were put on a par with their brethren in Church Courts, and had kirk-sessions to aid them in their pastoral work. The immediate effect of the act had been very great. Nearly 200 churches at once rose over the land, not only in populous cities, but in extensive country districts, as at Latheron already referred to, where a parish with thirty miles of sea-board, and 320 square miles of area, instead of its one parish church, had five fully-equipped charges, each with its own minister, kirk-session, and school. It was blessed work for the great Master, into which Dr. Chalmers, Mr. M'Cheyne, and many men of kindred spirit had thrown their whole heart.

But on this field also the Church was now to be assailed,

and once more the Court of Session was called in to deal the blow. Certain heritors of Stewarton applied for an interdict. It could not be shown that any civil interests were infringed on; the Church had been careful to leave these where she found them. No civil law, not even the formidable Patronage Act of Queen Anne, had been touched. The whole action of the Church was confined to making more efficient provision for having her spiritual work carried out. But in spite of this fact, and of the masterly argument and protest of Lord Moncreiff, the interdict was granted. At a blow, more than 200 ordained Presbyterian ministers were stripped of one-half their sacred functions, more than 200 kirk-sessions were extinguished, and this was done by civil judges sitting in a secular court. Without any allegation that a single Act of Parliament had been infringed on, the Lords of Session wrested from the Church the power of administering in such matters the spiritual affairs belonging to her as a Church of Christ.

How the decision was received may be seen from the speech of Dr. Chalmers, when immediately afterwards, addressing the Commission of Assembly, he exclaimed, "It is not on one point, but on all that we are assailed. . . . The ancient wall of circumvallation that has protected us in former days has all been broken down."*

And not less decisive was the language of Dr. Begg, who was prepared to accept the judgment in the Stewarton case as of itself enough to drive the evangelical majority out of the Establishment—"This judgment is deserving of the most solemn and serious consideration of the Church, as one of the most violent attempts which has yet been made to overturn the foundations of our Church. Our foundation principle is Presbyterianism—that all our ministers are equal—that every minister is bound to rule as well as teach—and it appears to me that the Civil Courts have no more right to subvert that principle than they have to overturn the whole constitution of the Church; or rather, this is the constitution which the Civil Courts are now attempting to overturn.

* *Witness* Newspaper, 1st February, 1843.

* * * * *

"But whatever the Government may do or not do, we have a plain and clear course of duty to follow—to stand upon our Presbyterian principles and say, If you drive these men out of the Church you will drive us also. We will go with them. They shall not be separated from us, nor will we allow the Civil Courts to separate those whom Christ has united, or to separate rule from teaching in Christ's house. There is a formidable prospect as well before the Church as before the kingdom of Scotland. Our leaving the Establishment I reckon to be a very insignificant matter as compared with what is to come after." *

While a struggle such as this was going on, the feelings of both parties, as might have been expected, began to get embittered. Hard sayings came from the bench, little in keeping with the usual judicial calmness of the place; while on the other side bold words were fearlessly spoken, according to the use and wont of Scottish Churchmen since the days of Knox. Obviously, things were getting dangerous, and if the conflict went on in this fashion, the most disastrous results must be looked for.

It was the fear of this that had led to certain private attempts, so early as 1840 and 1841, to come to a common understanding. On the one hand, Lord Aberdeen and Mr. Hope, Dean of Faculty, and on the other, Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Candlish, sought to reach some common ground on which the controversy might be arranged. The direct result was unfortunate, and yet, when these negotiations ceased, the Church was not without reasons for thankfulness, both because of what had been escaped from, and what had been gained.

There had been great danger of a compromise. The Veto law was to be repealed, and to this the friends of the Church would have willingly agreed, provided some other plan could have been found for securing the standing of the Christian people, and skilful lawyers and statesmen were exercising all their ingenuity in devising a way in which the Veto law was really

* *Witness*, 28th January, 1843.

to be set aside, and yet the object of it substantially gained. The problem was found to be insoluble, and in the opinion of many it was well. Under all the specious appearances of agreement, there lay a real antagonism of principle—Erastianism against Spiritual Independence—and in the end it was surely best that such questions should be dealt with frankly and honestly, apart from all appearance of evasion.

And there was one other reason for thankfulness. In after days, when the great breach had actually taken place, the leading men who guided the counsels of the Church had the satisfaction of thinking that the most sincere desire had been manifested to go as far as, in honour, they could—to the extreme limit indeed —in the way of fair and reasonable concession to the views of their opponents. Even at the time the negotiations had one beneficial result. The favourite cry against the Church, which her adversaries were never tired of repeating, was that the whole movement was due to clerical ambition. The Church was merely grasping at power for herself. Mr. Hope, the Dean of Faculty, had made that the great theme of a bulky pamphlet, and year after year the secular press had kept incessantly ringing the changes on priestly love of power. It turned out that the measure which Lord Aberdeen pressed on their acceptance was designed to take the power from the people and give it to the Church. This, in the face of the country, she distinctly refused, insisting that her Christian people should have their rights fully preserved. In some quarters this announcement seems to have been received with surprise, more especially in the House of Peers, where some even of those opposed to the Church could not withhold a tribute of respect to her for the course which she had followed.

There is no need to dwell on the cases which began rapidly to multiply towards the close of the conflict. Hardly any step could be taken by the Church in which she was not obstructed by some interdict. When a minister was about to be deposed for theft, on the ground of a sentence acquiesced in by himself, an interdict came from the Court of Session to prevent his deposition. When a Presbytery was about to try a minister

on a charge of fraud and swindling, an interdict came to arrest the process. And the worst feature of these and similar interferences was, that they resulted logically from those general principles of law which had been deliberately adopted by the Court. Thus it was that, while the secular judges were invading the spiritual province, and subverting the authority of the Church, the minds both of ministers and people were opened, step by step, to the true meaning of spiritual independence, and men were made to feel the vital importance of the principles at stake.

When the meeting, therefore, of the Assembly of 1842 drew near, it was felt that some far more decisive step must be taken on the part of the Church. Accordingly, the Claim of Right, the most important document in the whole "Ten Years' Conflict," was prepared. It was drawn by Mr. Alexander Dunlop, to whom the Church was so deeply indebted, and after being urged on the Court by the eloquence of Dr. Chalmers, it was, by an overwhelming majority, adopted and passed. It consisted of a formal appeal to the Queen and Government of the country, narrating the grievances of the Church, and claiming, under the constitution of Scotland, a right to be protected from the encroachments of the Civil Court. The language was firm, but according to the admission of even hostile statesmen, it was calm and respectful. Addressing the Throne, the Church made a solemn demand for relief, accompanied by a no less solemn assurance, that if her claim were refused, she could no longer continue to discharge her functions within the Establishment.

For many months no notice was taken in high quarters of the appeal thus formally made, but as summer and autumn passed away, there were ominous signs of approaching danger.

In the House of Lords the final decision in the Auchterarder case was pronounced on the 9th of August. The Court found, on the application of Mr. Young, that he was entitled to damages—estimated by himself at £10,000—due from the Presbytery on account of their decision. It was a new state of things. Presbyteries were Courts known to and sanctioned by the constitution of the country, and hitherto it had been believed that, as jurymen in their box and judges on the bench

are exempted from actions for damages, even when found wrong in their decisions, so the members of Presbyteries were equally protected, and it became a question whether the Church could remain in this position, that when she was addressing herself to the solemn responsibilities connected with the ordination of a minister, she might have an action of damages for £10,000 hanging over her head.

There was yet more serious cause for alarm. Principal Macfarlane, Dr. Cook, and the Moderates as a party, resolved finally to make common cause with the deposed ministers of Strathbogie. There were among their number, indeed, those who, like Dr. Brunton, repudiated the idea of spiritual sentences being invalidated by the decisions of secular judges. But the party, as a whole, took their stand on the civil law, as entitling them to treat the spiritual sentence as a nullity. It was difficult to view this as anything else than a combination within the Church herself for the overthrow of that sacred authority which she held from Christ, her Head; and it was obvious that this attitude of the Moderates must lead to new and yet more formidable complications.

The surviving ministers of that time may still recall the feeling with which on every side the clouds were now seen to be gathering, and all the signs of a fatal crisis hurrying on. The principles for which it was their duty to contend were never felt to be more sacred, but perplexities were rising, the path of duty was getting dark, and in many a manse men were in a season of felt need, looking up to the great Master not only for grace to be found faithful, but for wisdom to "know what Israel ought to do."

V. The Convocation.

In these circumstances a suggestion was thrown out and eagerly welcomed, that all the ministers who had acted together during the conflict should meet at Edinburgh for mutual conference. Thirty-two fathers of the Church issued the invitation; travelling expenses were provided; the laity of Edinburgh opened their homes to receive the ministers, and the result was, that in the wintry days of November they came from all parts of Scotland, 474 in number, the largest Assembly of ministers which up to that time Edinburgh had ever seen. They were a band of brethren among whom one felt it was no common privilege to be allowed to take a place. A keen observer from the outside, Lord Cockburn, has testified that the whole chivalry of the Church of Scotland was in that Convocation, and there was one in their own ranks, Dr. James Hamilton, himself a "man greatly beloved," who with loving hand has sketched the gathering.

"When we looked at the materials of the meeting . . . we wished that those were present in whose power it lies to preserve to the Scottish Establishment all this learning and this worth. There was the chairman [Dr. Chalmers], who might so easily have been the Adam Smith, the Leibnitz, or the Bossuet of the day, but who, having obtained a better part, has laid economics, and philosophy, and eloquence on the altar which sanctified himself. There was Dr. Gordon, lofty in simplicity, whose vast conceptions and majestic emotions plough deeper the old channels of customary words, and make common phrases appear solemn and sublime after he has used them. There were Dr. Keith, whose labours in the Prophecies have sent his fame through Europe, and are yearly bringing converts into the Church of Christ; and Mr. James Buchanan, whose deep-

drawn sympathy, and rich Bible lore, and Christian refinement have made him a son of consolation to so many of the sons of sorrow. There were Dr. Welsh, the biographer and bosom friend of Thomas Brown; Dr. Forbes, among the most inventive of modern mathematicians; and Dr. Paterson, whose 'Manse Garden' is read for the sake of its poetry, and wisdom, and Christian kindness where there are no gardens, and will be read for the sake of other days when there are no manses. And there was Dr. Patrick Macfarlan, whose calm judgment is a sanction to any measure, and who, holding the richest benefice in Scotland, most appropriately moved the resolution that rather than sacrifice their principles they should surrender their possessions. And not to mention 'names the poet must not speak,' there were in that Assembly the men who are dearest of all to the godly throughout the land, the men whom the Lord has delighted to honour—all the ministers in whose parishes have been great revivals, from the Apostle of the North, good old Dr. Macdonald, whose happy countenance is a signal for expectation and gladness in every congregation he visits, and Mr. Burns, of Kilsyth, whose affectionate counsels and prayers made the Convocation feel towards him as a father, down to those younger ministers of whom, but for our mutual friendship, I could speak more freely."*

It was on Thursday, the 17th of November, 1842, that this important meeting assembled in St. George's Church, where, after an hour spent in devotional exercises, Dr. Chalmers preached to an overflowing audience one of those sermons which once heard can never be forgotten. His text, "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness," went straight to men's hearts. Frankly, and without disguise, he pointed to the darkness gathering round the Church's path of duty, and then broke forth in the confidence of assured faith as he spoke of the light promised to the upright.

The meetings which followed were held in Roxburgh Church, near the University. The proceedings were strictly private. Only ministers were present, and the whole arrangements were studiously made to facilitate the interchange of sentiment

* Harp on the Willows, pp. 14, 15.

among brethren who had this in common, that all their earthly interests were at stake. Twice a-day the Convocation met, a considerable portion of the time at each diet being spent in prayer, with occasional intervals of praise. And thus men proceeded, as best they could, to look in the face the whole difficulties of their position.

On one point there was found from the outset to be complete agreement: For the Church to recede, or in any way abandon the ground she had taken up, was held at once to be impossible.

But while this was clear, there was yet considerable difference of opinion as to the course which ought actually to be taken. Some of the more ardent friends of Evangelism regarded the whole question as already settled, and wished at once to precipitate the Disruption, as if the only thing to be done was immediately to separate from the State. Others whose Church principles were not less decided shrank from such a course, proposing to remain in the Establishment, fighting the battle as hitherto inside the Church, and leaving it for the State to take the serious responsibility of breaking the tie and driving them out. It was on the evening meeting of the 18th that the whole differences of opinion on these and other points, more especially Patronage, came into view, and they were, it must be confessed, urged with sufficient keenness—so much so, indeed, that there arose in many minds no little anxiety as to the result. The prediction of the adversaries had on one point been signally falsified. The Convocation was to be a failure, they said, because so few would attend.* But the adversaries had another ground of comfort in reserve. Even if they came together, said the *Times*, "We may safely leave the dissensions which already manifest themselves among the Non-intrusion party to humble the pride and overthrow the power of their leaders."† Was this, then, going to be realised? One of the members has recorded his

* Dr. Guthrie tells how Mr. Maitland (afterwards Lord Dundrennan) meeting Mr. Craufurd (Lord Ardmillan), assured him that the Convocation was to be "a complete failure. 'What,' said Craufurd, 'would you call it a failure if two hundred were to attend? Would you call *that* a failure?' 'No,' says Maitland, 'but catch two hundred of them coming up for such a purpose.'"—Memoir of Dr. Guthrie, vol. ii. p. 44.

† Ten Years' Conflict, vol. ii. p. 392.

impression that "altogether the tone of this evening was fitted to alarm and humble. To an adverse and reproachful eye it would present, indeed, nothing but conflicting views and irreconcilable feelings. Yet, to one who looked deeper, and with no partial bias, it might have, even now, been obvious that the confusion was not that of angry feud, but of honest and courageous freedom. There was union of purpose and mutual confidence among all. They saw eye to eye, and were not afraid to look each other in the face." At the same time there was much to show the need of prayer. "And to this duty were the brethren forthwith admonished with consummate tact, and touching pathos, and gracious success by Dr. Candlish. It was manifest that the speaker himself was peculiarly solemnised."*

With what feelings men separated late on that evening may be seen from the journal of Dr. Landsborough: "Went to my lodgings full of fears. Prayed for union and heavenly wisdom. Awoke in the morning with a sigh." Next day he notes a change. "19th November.—Went to Convocation. Dr. Chalmers began the business. He seemed sent by the Lord in answer to prayer. The Spirit of the Lord seemed to breathe on the troubled waters. All became wonderful harmony and agreement."† Another has said: "It was the same Convocation that had met the previous evening, but how different its aspect and omen. . . . Light had broken, and order was restored. Suddenly the heavens became clear, and there was a great calm."‡

These feelings prevailed and deepened through the five succeeding days that the Convocation lasted. Men were obviously in earnest in seeking light, the difficulties of each course were conscientiously weighed, and ultimately there came to be substantial unity.

The first series of resolutions—passed almost unanimously—stated, as the previous Assembly had done, the only terms on which the Church could discharge her functions in connection with the State. To this declaration 423 ministers declared their assent on the spot, and the number was largely increased by subsequent adherences.

* *Pres. Review*, January, 1843, pp. 584, 585.

† Memoir, p. 174. ‡ *Pres. Review*, January, 1843, p. 585.

This was well; but what if the claims of the Church should be refused? Looking to such an issue as all but certain, the Convocation felt it their duty to speak out in such terms that no blame should rest with them if, when the crisis came, men were taken by surprise. By a deliberate vote, a second series of resolutions was passed, in which they pledged themselves that if the claim for redress were rejected, they would "tender the resignation of those civil advantages which they can no longer hold in consistency with the free and full exercise of their spiritual functions." It was during the second week that this decision was come to, when many of the members had already gone home; but these resolutions were agreed to by 354 ministers, ultimately increased by adherents to the number of 480.

Before the Convocation closed, Dr. Chalmers unfolded his scheme for a Sustentation Fund, and recommended it with such eloquence that Dr. Nathaniel Paterson exclaimed, "The lifeboat looked almost better than the ship." It is believed that few, if any, members of the Convocation had the least idea of the far-seeing sagacity, worthy of the highest statesmanship, with which the plan was devised. Could they have known the actual results, their trial would have been comparatively light, but men only smiled as they listened with good-humoured incredulity to what seemed a visionary scheme. Their trust was in the promised care of Him whose word cannot fail.

The work was now over, but before closing they adopted unanimously a formal and solemn address to Government, which was to accompany the resolutions. They appointed a committee to send deputations throughout the country. It was further agreed, on the motion of Dr. Lorimer, of Haddington, to make the state of the Church a subject of special prayer, a fixed time being set apart for this purpose in all their manses each Saturday evening. A resolution was also passed appointing Dr. James Buchanan to draw up an address to the people of Scotland; and this when it appeared was found to be written with all his well-known gracefulness of style and power of appeal, and was widely circulated over the country.

The last meeting was in public, and was held in Lady Glenorchy's Church, where addresses were delivered stating the results.

And so men prepared to part, and go home to their parishes with the feeling that, however hopeless might be their appeal to Government, yet there was not only the unfailing promise of a gracious God to sustain them, but they had, throughout the Church, a great brotherhood of men like-minded with themselves, on whose unflinching steadfastness in the day of trial they could firmly rely. "The scene we witnessed when as a band of sworn brothers they stood up to close and seal their work with a hymn of thanksgiving, on the evening of the 24th November, in Lady Glenorchy's Church, we shall never forget. The solemn awe of eternity had fallen upon the vast congregation. And the brethren seemed as if a sacred host of chosen warriors, who just had . . . plighted their faith to one another, and were now prepared, even unto death, to follow the Captain of their salvation."*

It may be well now to glance at the impressions which all this made on the minds of some who took part in it, as these are to be found in the Disruption Mss. Dr. Lorimer, of Glasgow, observes: "I was present, heard the whole discussions, and gave in my adhesion without any reservation. . . . My venerable father was in the chair of the Convocation on the memorable night, or rather morning, when the final resolutions were voted upon. It might be between two and three o'clock in the morning when Mr. Guthrie, of Edinburgh, called the roll. I have ever felt the Convocation to have been the real Disruption of the ministers. I was encouraged by the effects of the Convocation on the country. Down to that moment there had been an ominous and most discouraging apathy. The decision and self-denial of the ministers first aroused their congregations."†

Mr. Robertson, of Gartly, one of the faithful minority in Strathbogie, who bore themselves so steadfastly through the battle of interdicts, mentions that he "hailed with delight the circular calling the Convocation." Describing the effect of Dr. Chalmers' opening sermon, he says it was attended "with such Divine wisdom and unction as to strengthen and support me in my principles; and I firmly believe that, to the great body of ministers who had the privilege to hear it, by God's blessing,

* *Pres. Review*, January, 1843, p. 586. † Dis. Mss. i. p. 3.

it 'created the spirit it described, and conveyed the light of which it showed the need.' . . . What with this and the spirit of prayer and supplication which was evidently poured out, I felt myself enabled to address the Convocation; . . . and I have to bless the Lord that what such an humble individual as I was enabled to say . . . had, from the circumstance of my advanced years and numerous family, contributed somewhat to nerve the courage of some weak and wavering spirits." * Such was the good man's remembrance within four years of the event. A report of what he actually said was published immediately afterwards by one who was present: "I am advanced in life, with a family of twelve yet to be provided for. Above all, if I am driven from the Church I must leave my people; for not a foot of ground will I be allowed within the parish whereon to build a place of worship. Nevertheless, my family interests, my early associations, my people, whom I have tended so long, I am willing to surrender at the call of duty." †

The remark of another country minister, the Rev. R. Inglis, of Edzell, attracted notice at the time: "Some of my brethren have a difficulty in pledging themselves to go out, because of their numerous families; I merely wish to say that that is one of my reasons for resolving to make the sacrifice. I am the father of a young family; I shall have little to leave them, more especially if we are forced to give up our livings. But I want, at least, to leave them a good name—I wish all my children, when I am gone, to be able to say that they are the children of an *honest man*." ‡

* Dis. Mss. xvii. p. 2.

† *Pres. Review*, January, 1843, p. 589.

‡ He died 19th January, 1876, and his copresbyter and friend, Mr. Nixon, of Montrose, after mentioning the difficulties which Mr. Inglis had in the education of his family, in consequence of the Disruption, adds: "It says much for the nobleness with which difficulties can be overcome, and the blessing that rests on the right rearing of children, that the parents of the children in the Free Manse of Edzell so reared theirs, that nine sons have gone out into the world, some to the most distant regions, and are not only making for themselves good outward positions, but as regards the bulk, if not the whole of them, are remembering and exemplifying the lessons taught them under the parental roof."—*Free Church Monthly Record*, 1st March, 1876.

"Mr. M'Cheyne was never absent from any of the diets of this solemn assembly. He felt the deepest interest in every matter that came before them; got great light as to the path of duty in the course of the consultations; and put his name to all the resolutions, heartily sympathising in the decided determination that, as a Church of Christ, we must abandon our connection with the State if our Claim of Rights were rejected. These eight days were times of remarkable union and prayerfulness. The proceedings from time to time were suspended till the brethren had again asked counsel of the Lord by prayer; and none present will forget the affecting solemnity with which, on one occasion, Mr. M'Cheyne poured out our wants before the Lord."*

There were some whose enforced absence prevented their taking part in the consultations, but whose impressions may also be noted. Mr. Taylor, of Flisk, then of Grangemouth, thus records his experience: "Often has it been said that it was the inspiriting influence of the public meetings which hurried on our ministers to take the steps which led to the Disruption. My own experience contradicts this. It was home thought and home reflection which regulated every step I had taken. I sought guidance from God, and 'with His eye set on me, He gave me direction.'" After telling how he was one of those who, in the first instance, thought "that no step toward separation should be taken by the Church herself, but that, maintaining at once her principles and her position, she should leave the awful responsibility of disestablishing her upon the State," he goes on to mention how he came to be convinced of the untenableness of this position, "and well has it been for the efficiency of our movement that, instead of wasting her energies in fruitless litigations, the Church was led at once to come out on the ground of her Protest." In estimating the importance of the Convocation, he says, "the Rubicon was passed."†

A similar case was that of Mr. M'Millan, minister of Kilmory, a parish in one of the secluded districts of the island of Arran. It is said he had not much turn or taste for the business of Church Courts, and at Kilmory could with difficulty have

* Memoir, p. 154. † Dis. Mss. xxxvii.

attended either Presbytery or Synod. Yet he was much interested in Church affairs, and the interest deepened as there was the prospect of a serious issue. He was unable, through bodily infirmities, to attend the Convocation, but he cheerfully appended his name to both series of resolutions. "I think," he says, writing to a friend at the time, "that the Church should accept of no measure whatever which leaves her at the mercy of the Civil Court, for it is perfectly evident that the Court of Session at present takes a kind of pleasure in opposing and oppressing the Evangelical party in the Church. . . . I have received a copy of the Memorial to Government. The concluding part of it is very solemn and pressing, and our rulers must be perfectly regardless of the real welfare of the nation, and of their own responsibility to God, if they dare to set it at nought."

VI. Appeal to the Country.

A GREAT step had now been taken. Men stood pledged, if there were no redress, to give up their livings, and abandon the Establishment. It may well be believed that, on returning to their parishes, there was no little anxiety as to what impression all this would make on their people. In many cases they left Edinburgh with the foregone conclusion, not only that their demands would be rejected in Parliament, but that they themselves would have to separate from their congregations, and to leave the country. Mr. Thomson, of Muckhart, says: "My hopes of success in the country districts were but small. The tenantry, by long-continued efforts on the part of the gentry, have, in the great majority of instances, in some districts been brought into a state of complete subserviency to their landlords in political matters; and I fear the pressure has been so long continued, that even in reference to ecclesiastical matters there would be submission too." * After referring to other discouragements, he states:—"Under these circumstances, I have been seriously turning over in my mind whether I should fix on Australia or America as the scene of my future labours."

In regard to city congregations, Dr. Lorimer, of Glasgow, had similar misgivings: "It was impossible to hide from one's self (so we judged before the Disruption) that there would not be room in Glasgow for all who were certainly resolved to come out. The next consideration with me was that those who had been longest in Glasgow . . . would naturally be the persons to remain. Consequently that for myself, and various other younger brethren, there was no course but to remove to a distance. Despairing, or at least very doubtful, of finding a

* Dis. Mss. xxviii. p. 6.

sphere of usefulness as a minister of the Gospel at home, I seriously bethought me to what other department I could turn myself. When I thought of the ministry abroad, my mind turned towards Canada. Repeatedly did I speak of Holland as probably a cheap and pleasant residence. Mrs. Lorimer and I had been not a little interested in that country on a brief tour in 1839." *

It seems strange that even Mr. M'Cheyne, of Dundee, should have thought there would be no sphere for him in Scotland. A copresbyter, Mr. Stewart, of Lochee, who returned with him from the Convocation, mentions that they had been consulting "as to what it might be their duty to do in the event of the Disruption, and where they might be scattered. Mr. Stewart said he could preach Gaelic, and might go to the Highlanders in Canada if it were needful. Mr. M'Cheyne said: "I think of going to the many thousand convicts that are transported beyond the seas, for no man careth for their souls." † In the same spirit Dr. James Hamilton, looking on the Convocation, and saddened by the prospect of their being cast out, takes comfort in the thought of what a blessing it would be to the world if they were "scattered abroad, everywhere preaching the Word." ‡

It was with such feelings, and in the face of such difficulties, men had to go forward. In some cases, when they returned to their parishes, it might well have seemed that their worst fears were going to be realised. At Dundee, Mr. Lewis found that the intelligence of the resolution he had taken "was received generally in solemn silence, not unfrequently, also, with a look of doubt and hesitation, as if inquiring whether we had done wisely. They were evidently unprepared for so serious an issue. The prudence and caution of the national character now showed itself as decidedly as its love of the logic and discussion of the question had in the preceding ten years. They seemed to hang back and shrink from the practical issue, as if a thing never in their contemplation. The more outspoken would say: 'I hope you have well thought of it.' 'Are you sure there is no other course?' 'Have you not been hasty?' . . . In my then state of mind, it seemed as if the people were about to desert

* Dis. Mss. i. p. 4. † Memoir, p. 155. ‡ Harp on the Willows, p. 15.

their ministers, and they were about to be left alone in that sacrifice to principle." * He was soon to be undeceived.

At Cleish, in Kinross-shire, Mr. Duncan mentions: "I had no reason to expect any sympathy from the greater part of the people of Cleish, . . . so that there appeared to be a moral certainty that a mere handful would leave along with me." †

At Stevenston, in Ayrshire, Dr. Landsborough's people "did not appear to take much interest in the matter. Even after the Convocation, which I attended, the interest was not greatly increased, so that when meetings were called, to be addressed . . . on the state of the Church, it was disheartening to see that few attended. As my own mind was made up to leave the Establishment if matters were not satisfactorily settled, my prospects were far from being bright. I said to some who I knew were friendly: . . . 'I think very few will follow me.' 'They will, perhaps, be more numerous than you expect,' was the reply." ‡

Even at Kilsyth, after the time of revival, and the numerous meetings called by Dr. Burns, the prospect at first was not encouraging. "When [after the Convocation] names and subscriptions were called for, preparatory to the anticipated Disruption, few seemed ready to take the step, . . . cherishing, no doubt, the hope that the dreaded catastrophe might somehow be averted. One member, a pious weaver in the village, said that 'as it was not till the people saw David going up by the ascent of Olivet, his head covered as he went up barefoot, that all the people that was with him went up weeping, . . . so it would be in this case.'" §

One great difficulty with which the Church had to contend at the time was the general hostility of the newspaper press, and its formidable power in the country. Hugh Miller had, indeed, been for some years in the field, giving powerful aid in the

* Pres. of Dundee, Parker Mss.

† Dis. Mss. xii. p. 1. His father, Dr. Duncan, of Ruthwell, had said (Memoir, p. 286), "I hope none of my children will show the white feather. Indeed, I know they will not." He was right in regard to them all; and not even the above discouragement made the young pastor of Cleish hesitate.

‡ Dis. Mss. xxxviii. p. 1. § Dis. Mss. xxix. p. 6.

columns of the *Witness*. The *Scottish Guardian* and other prints were doing valuable work, but as a whole, the press was hostile. Of the sixty-three newspapers published in Scotland, only eight were on the side of the Church,* and the holding of the Convocation seemed only to have rendered the opposition of the hostile press more bitter.† Difference of political sentiment made no difference in this. "By asserting the independent jurisdiction of the Church," said Dr. Cunningham, "we have drawn upon our head the wrath of Tories, Whigs, and Radicals. . . . There is scarcely an organ of public opinion that supports our principles. And if you attend to the public press you will find, perhaps, the attack of a High Church journal on Friday, followed upon Saturday by a Voluntary print; . . . but in spite of all this misrepresentation, . . . we are confident in the goodness of our cause."

In view of the momentous interests at stake, it obviously became the duty of the Church, by means of deputations, addresses, and otherwise, to come into direct communication with her people, and make known her principles all over the land; and such appeals, for the most part, met with the most hearty and cordial response. In dealing with the apathy of his people, for example, above referred to, Mr. Lewis, of Dundee, delivered a series of six lectures, in the course of which he remarks: "I never had a more attentive or interested auditory, the same persons making it a point of duty to hear me out. On the sixth and last night, I put the question: Leave the Established Church or remain—when upwards of 400 signed their adherence [to the Convocation resolutions]; and subse-

* Life of Dr. Cunningham, p. 134.

† A single illustration may be given to show the spirit in which the warfare was carried on. Mr. Maitland Makgill Crichton was an active supporter of the Church. "With our two editorial auxiliaries, paste and the scissors," says the *Witness*, "we have been painfully clipping out and fastening together in a single column every vituperative scrap of which Mr. Crichton has been the subject, for the last fortnight, and find, on spreading the roll before us on the carpet, that it already extends to the astounding length of eleven feet, six inches, and three eighth-parts of undiluted abuse in one brief fortnight. Depend upon it, Mr. Makgill Crichton is a very formidable man. His efforts are telling; he strikes so hard that the blow rebounds."—Memoir of Mr. M. Crichton, p. 166.

quently the number was nearly doubled. . . . On looking over the list . . . it was obvious that both the intelligence and heart of the congregation were with us." *

In most cases it was found that a single meeting was enough to gain the object. Thus at Woodside, Aberdeen, "the actings of the Convocation were fully explained to the people. The answer of Government to the Church's Claim was fully discussed at a meeting held on the 25th January, and an adherence of 1145 persons belonging to the congregation obtained."† At Ardoch, in Perthshire, the Convocation gave a powerful impulse to the process of preparation. "Then was my congregation," says Mr. Grant, "convinced that the Church was truly in earnest, that the principles for which she was contending deeply affected the glory of the Redeemer and vital godliness. . . . This produced a marked solemnity, and not a few made the difficulties of their minister to be their own, the difficulties of the Church their own. . . . Two-thirds of my congregation . . . signed the Convocation resolutions."‡

At Lesmahagow, "after the Convocation, considerable interest was excited throughout the parish. . . . The Disruption being now to all appearance inevitable, I deemed it my duty," Dr. Parker states, "to summon a general meeting of the parishioners on a week-day evening, that I might state what had been done, and the steps that now behoved to be taken in order to the maintenance of a Free Presbyterian Church. The meeting was peculiarly solemn. From the commencement to the close the deepest attention prevailed. Many were in tears, and when we joined in singing, Pray that Jerusalem may have peace and felicity, &c., it seemed that the associations of many years were awakened, and the spirit of the olden time brought back again. Numbers pressed forward to subscribe their adherence to the resolutions of the Convocation, and to declare their determination of making common cause with the faithful ministers."§ The meeting was held on the 28th December, a date which was merely fixed as convenient for the parties, but it "was the anniversary of the death of one of the martyrs of Lesmahagow

* Mr. Lewis, Pres. of Dundee, Parker Mss.

† Dis. Mss. xxvii. p. 3. ‡ Dis. Mss. xiii. p. 2. § Dis. Mss. xlix. p. 8.

(1680), Steel of Skellyhill, who was shot dead at his own door before the eyes of his beloved wife, who had her infant and only child in her arms."*

There were cases, indeed, in which the people went beyond their ministers in zeal for the cause. Mr. Thomson, of Wick, belonged to the Evangelical party in the Church, but as the crisis approached he felt considerable perplexity, and on returning from the Convocation he called his people together on the 28th November in order to explain, which he did at some length, why he had *not* seen it to be his duty to sign the resolutions. During his address, the congregation "sat looking at each other much astonished," and after the meeting had been dismissed, the people, on the motion of Mr. Davidson, banker, sat still, elected a chairman, and asked Mr. Thomson to remain and listen to the proceedings. They went on to express their views with much personal respect for their pastor, but in direct opposition to the sentiments of his address. "It was then proposed that solemn thanks should be offered up to God for the grace which had been vouchsafed to the 350 members of the Convocation who had bound themselves to go out, and this was done in a most impressive manner by Mr. Donald George."† At a second meeting held shortly after, they formally adopted the Convocation resolutions; and the result was, that Mr. Thomson saw it to be his duty to go along with his people, a resolution which was received with much satisfaction.

But what produced the deepest impression was the presence of the deputations sent forth to hold meetings and give addresses through all the parishes of Scotland. It was in the dead of winter that these movements took place, at a time when the short day left the population in country districts fully at leisure; and many a strange incident of that stirring time still lives in the memory of survivors.

The state of the weather sometimes made it difficult to carry on the work. At Moy, Dr. M'Lauchlan mentions that a meeting was called with the view of having the resolutions of the Convocation expounded by a deputation from head-quarters, consisting of Mr. Topp, of Elgin, Mr. Macrae, of Knockbain, and Mr.

* Dis. Mss. xxxi. pp. 5, 18. † *Witness* Newspaper, 7th Dec., 1842.

Stewart, of Cromarty. "The day, which was the 11th of January, was stormy, and although the people collected in great numbers, none of the deputies appeared, alarmed by the depth of the snow. I went in consequence to the pulpit myself, and explained the object of the meeting. . . . The resolutions were afterwards signed almost universally throughout the parish."*

So also at Kiltarlity, in Inverness-shire: "On Friday [8th January] the deputation went to Kiltarlity. From unavoidable circumstances the intimation was very imperfect, and the parish church [the minister being adverse] was inaccessible, yet a congregation of 700 met the deputation in the open air—snow on the ground—and had a rustic tent erected for their accommodation. After an address in both languages, 584 gave in their names, and as half the parish had not heard of the visit, as many more names at least are expected. The meeting was concluded by prayer by the Catechist, an aged patriarch, the Christian father of the parish. He was so feeble that he had to be literally supported, like Moses of old by Aaron and Hur, while standing at prayer."†

Dr. Macdonald's visit to the Presbytery of Dornoch was enthusiastically welcomed. "Nothing could be more triumphant than the worthy Doctor's defence of the truths for which the Church is contending, and nothing more withering than his *exposé* of Moderate principles. The crowds which assembled were immense. . . . It showed the depth of feeling with which the Highlanders view the present contest, and no doubt also their veneration for the 'Apostle of the North,' . . . when crowds assembled to open up the roads which were blocked with snow, and when the horse could not carry through his gig, the Highlanders carried him and his gig over all impediments. Their answer was, when anything in the way of remuneration was offered, . . . O sir, when you come to preach to us and tell us of our Church which our fathers loved, the danger she is in, and that she looks to us for defence, oh, let it not be said that we would not do what we could."‡

While this was going on, various efforts were made by

* Dis. Mss. xlix. p. 8. † *Witness* Newspaper, 11th January, 1843.
‡ *Ibid.* 29th March, 1843.

opponents to counteract the movement. Sometimes they had recourse to the circulation of pamphlets.

"Sir James Graham's letter [to be afterwards noticed] was widely circulated in the North, but with little impression. One Highlander remarked, We see a great deal about the law in this letter, but very little of the Gospel. As Mr. Mackintosh, of Tain, and Mr. Matheson, of Kilmuir, were going through the Presbytery of Tongue, the letter was drifting along before them, . . . thick as the winter snow; but the Gospel . . . had a hold of the hearts of the people which all law could not subvert. One man, in obedience to his master's instructions, had been seen running at a great rate distributing copies. As he went along, his neighbour accosted him. . . . O Donald, what is all this haste for? O sir, replied Donald, I am in a great hurry, for I am very anxious to be back in time to hear Mr. Mackintosh, and sign for the Church."

Sometimes they applied to the sheriffs for interdicts. At Aberdeen the use of the city churches was interdicted,* but others, of course, were obtained, and crowded enthusiastic meetings of each congregation were held. The whole ministers, without one exception, adhered to the Convocation resolutions, and their feelings were rendered all the more decided because of the interdicts.

"At Largs,† in Ayrshire, a meeting was about to be held on a requisition by the people, when a small laird, whose property was rated at one shilling and ninepence of yearly stipend, obtained an interdict, shutting the parish church. The result was a triumphant and successful meeting in the Relief church, filled to overflowing by a most enthusiastic audience. Mr. Scott, of Hawkhill, one of the principal heritors, was in the chair.

"At Smailholm, a meeting had been called for Monday, the 6th of March, in the barn of Mr. Dickson, of West Third. On the Sabbath afternoon, however, Mr. Dickson's landlord, Geo. Baillie, Esq. of Jerviswood, sent him a message to the effect that the barn was not to be given to the deputation, and that Mr. B. would not allow a meeting such as that proposed to be

* *Witness* Newspaper, 18th Jan., 1843. † *Ibid.* 15th Feb. 1843.

held on the premises of which he was the proprietor. This announcement caused great excitement in the village, and as Mr. Dickson was a yearly tenant, the people resolved that rather than expose him to the risk of losing his farm, another place should be sought for, failing which, they would willingly stand in the open air. . . . At length, within four hours of the time of meeting, a carpenter's shop was obtained about a mile west of the village. The place was filled to overflowing, the opposition of Mr. Baillie having brought out many who might otherwise have been absent. . . . Planks had been laid across the couples of the roof, so that about a hundred individuals sat overhead listening to the speakers although they could not see them. About two-thirds of the audience were obliged to stand the two hours and a-half the meeting lasted, but not the least symptom of impatience was manifested, every one appearing to be more interested than another." *

A similar interference was met with in the parish of Symington. Mr. Orr, assistant and successor, had experienced the hostility of the proprietors after the Convocation. "At the first meeting of the heritors, which took place about six weeks afterwards, and at which I was present, Lieut.-Col. Kelso, of Dankeith, a retired Indian officer and the principal proprietor of the parish, asked me if it was true that I had signed the resolutions of that Convocation, and when I answered in the affirmative, he said that he would cease to contribute further a single shilling of my salary. At this time my salary was paid chiefly by the minister, and partly by the voluntary assessment on the part of the heritors; and those of them who were present seemed to acquiesce in the threat of the Colonel, as they said nothing to the contrary. At that meeting I said nothing further than that if they deemed me unworthy of their support, I did not desire it, and that though they withdrew every shilling of what they had hitherto contributed, it would not move me a single hair's-breadth from the path of duty, and from the obedience I owed to the great Head of the Church. . . .

"The deputation appointed to visit Symington consisted of the Rev. Dr. Paterson, of St. Andrew's Church, Glasgow, and

* *Witness*, 18th March, 1843.

the Rev. Mr. Buchan, of Hamilton. I accordingly intimated from the pulpit, on a Sabbath in January, that these ministers were about to visit the parish, and appointed a meeting to be held in the church on the Wednesday evening following, and asked the people to come.

"And well did they respond to the call, for nearly the whole congregation assembled . . . on a dark night in the month of January, so interested were they in the subject. But, alas, when the hour arrived, they were denied admission to the church, for on the very day after the meeting was intimated from the pulpit, Colonel Kelso went to the Sheriff at Ayr and obtained an interdict against the meeting being held, on the ground that there would likely be a disturbance in the church, and the seats might be damaged and destroyed. A short time before the hour of meeting, when sitting at tea with the deputation, three sheriff-officers entered the room, and put into each of our hands a copy of the interdict which the Colonel had obtained. Of such a thing I had never once dreamed, and was so taken aback that for a time I could not speak a word, and sat perfectly dumb. And well do I recollect the venerable Dr. Paterson clapping me on the shoulder and saying, 'Cheer up, man, there are worse things in the world than an interdict. You may soon find that it has done you a great deal of good.' And I believe it did, for the people were so irritated at the way they had been treated, that they became more resolute in adhering to what they believed to be the cause of righteousness and truth.

"In the meantime, what was now to be done? The people were all assembled in the street, and could not be addressed there in the dark winter night. It was decided to invite them down to my house. . . . This was accordingly done. Every room was filled, all the doors thrown open, and the ministers stood on chairs in the lobby and addressed the people, who all heard distinctly. It was a most enthusiastic meeting, and the Colonel was rather roughly handled by the speakers for the way he had acted towards the congregation of which he himself was an office-bearer."*

There were cases in which, instead of interdicts, opposition

* Dis. Mss. xlviii. pp. 4-8.

came in a different form, leading sometimes to rather remarkable scenes. "At Torosay," Mr. Middleton states, "I remember when two esteemed clergymen, the Rev. P. Macbride, Rothesay, and the Rev. Finlay Macpherson, of Kilbrandon, were on a tour in April, 1843, explaining the state of Church affairs, while preaching to a congregation of from 300 to 400, at the Bridge of Loch-don-head, that Mr. —— hurriedly rode up to the spot where the service was going on, said that he was the son of one of the heritors, that he had a deep interest in the welfare of the people, that he had a high esteem for the parish minister, and that he warned the people against those who were now going among them to seduce and draw them from the Church of their fathers, or words to that effect; and he concluded by taking off his hat and calling for three cheers for Mr. Clark, the parish minister. The officiating clergyman took no notice of this strange proceeding, and very little heed was given to it by the people in the way of response, though it created a great sensation in the audience. Only one man took off his hat—the schoolmaster—and even he, as if ashamed, replaced it immediately upon his head." *

Mr. Wood, of Elie, describes his visit to the southern districts of Dumfriesshire:—

"In the winter of 1842-43, the Disruption being now considered inevitable, deputations were sent out, under the auspices of the Convocation which had met in Edinburgh, to different parts of the country. Among others, Mr. Jollie, of Bowden, and I were commissioned to visit Dumfriesshire. Having stayed all the previous night at Bowden Manse, I started with Mr. Jollie on Monday, the 30th January. We travelled in my gig, by a road the remarkable scenery of which is little seen now-a-days, dining at Mosspaul, and arriving at Langholm about 9 P.M. Next afternoon we were joined by Mr. Clarke, of Half Morton, who was one of the deputation, and who had the charge of the local arrangements. That evening we held our first meeting in the Secession Meeting House—U. P. was a title yet unknown, nor did the Seceders at that time call their places of worship churches. Our meeting was most successful, crowded to the

* Dis. Mss. ix. pp. 2, 3.

very doors. One incident which occurred has fixed itself in my memory, and deserves to be recorded. I was, I think, the last speaker, and after dwelling on the encroachments made by the Court of Session, confirmed by the final judgment of the House of Lords, and on the manner in which we had been treated in Parliament, where the voice of the Scottish Members had been altogether overborne by the English majority, I said, on the spur of the moment, that such injustice was enough to justify Scotland in demanding the repeal of the Union. With that, to my surprise, and somewhat to my consternation, the meeting rose as one man, waving hats and handkerchiefs, and cheering again and again. No doubt the enthusiastic feelings of the people assisted our object, but I took care not to speak of repeal of the Union at our subsequent meetings.

"Next day we drove out to Eskdalemuir, a sort of colony of Cameronians, where we had a very good meeting in the Cameronian place of worship. We stayed all night with Mr. Walter Laidlaw, and in the morning visited Hislop's grave, which is close by. Then we started for Ewes in a snow-storm, resting at Westerkirk on the way. At Ewes we held a meeting in a barn belonging to Mr. Comyn, with whom we stayed all night. The day after we went to Half Morton, and held meetings at Waterbeck and Gretna, and on Saturday at Half Morton itself, where I preached on Sunday, 5th February, from Zeph. i. 12. On Monday I drove Mr. Clarke from Half Morton to Lockerby, where we had an excellent meeting in the evening. Next day we started for Dinwiddie, in the parish of Applegarth. Mr. Jollie and I were in the gig, and Mr. Clarke was riding in advance of us, evidently rehearsing a speech to himself, and amusing us now and then by the involuntary action which accompanied his mental labours. The day was intensely cold, and the 'roaring game,' so keenly engaged in during winter in Dumfriesshire, was in full play on every pool and lakelet. As we drew near the place of our destination, groups of curlers were overtaken on the road carrying their stones and brooms. 'Depend upon it,' said I, 'they have got up a bonspiel on the ice to engage the people, and prevent them from coming to our meeting.' The case, however, turned out to be far otherwise.

The Rev. Dr. Dunbar, minister of Applegarth, indignant that his parish, hitherto as thoroughly under Moderate rule as any in Scotland, should be invaded by a band of uncommissioned agitators, sent intimation through the parish that all must attend the meeting—that he would himself be present, and would soon scatter it. Nay, so great was the interest which he took in the matter, that he had that morning gone down to the ice, and brought up a whole band of curlers, telling them that there was more important work on hand.

"This we learned on our arrival at Dinwiddie, and found that the crowds we had seen trooping along the road bearing their curling implements, were not going to the ice, as we had supposed, but were coming *from* it, many of them sorely grudging the loss of a day's play. The barn, one of the largest in the country, was crowded to the doors; ladders, couples, the top of the thrashing machine, all were thronged, and a meeting had been got together for us by our opponents far larger than we had ever expected to see in so remote a part of the country. Mr. Jollie having opened the meeting with prayer, Dr. Dunbar rose and said that he and his parishioners had come to hear what the deputation had to say. Mr. Clarke addressed the meeting at some length, and at the close of his speech made some allusion to the reply he expected from Dr. Dunbar. That gentleman, however, declared that before he opened his mouth he wished to hear all that the deputation had to say. Of course, no objection could be made to this, and I went on with my address, stating however at the outset, that I intended to take the opportunity of replying to any remarks which Dr. Dunbar might make, and that we (the deputation) would shorten our addresses in order that full time might be given to him. Accordingly, when I had concluded, Mr. Jollie declined to make any remarks. Dr. Dunbar then rose, and after a speech, in which he never even attempted to reply to the arguments which had been adduced, proposed a resolution to the effect, that the meeting disapprove of the conduct of the deputation in intruding into other parishes; 'and those' added the Doctor, 'who think with me have, of course, no longer any business here.' Considerable excitement was occasioned by this proposition; half uttered

murmurings of 'shame' and 'unmanly' were heard, in the midst of which a farmer of the parish seconded the resolution. Dr. Dunbar then called for a show of hands, but to this I stoutly objected until the reply which I had risen to make should have been heard. 'Then, my friends,' said Dr. Dunbar, 'you have no longer anything to do here.' 'We shall be sorry,' was our reply, 'if Dr. Dunbar leaves us, but if a vote is to be taken, this can only be done after a reply has been made, according to the arrangement proposed at the outset.' Dr. Dunbar, however, was not to be detained, and left the place, accompanied, however, only by eleven persons. Some few more left the barn along with him, but returned as soon as he was well out of sight. Mr. Clarke and I then replied at length, pointing out the gross Erastianism of Dr. Dunbar's statement, and at the close of the proceedings, the people crowded round us, expressing their regret that we could not remain with them an hour or two longer. This, however, was impossible, as we had to address a meeting at Wamphray in the evening. The moral effect of this meeting was very great over a large district of country. That a man whose character was so thoroughly respected, should have been defeated in his own parish by three strangers showed plainly the direction in which public feeling was tending.

"'The battle of Dinwiddie,' as it was called, became a fertile theme for ballads, articles, and correspondence in the local papers. I am sorry that I have not preserved any of them, of which many were sent to me by friends in Dumfriesshire, during the months which followed my return home." *

Yet another of these meetings may be noticed, and one in which the opponents were successful. The account has been thrown by the reporter into a form somewhat grotesque, but in regard to the facts themselves it is certified as correct.

"On Thursday evening, January 19, agreeably to a previous intimation by handbill, a large number of the parishioners of Fintray [Aberdeenshire], assembled at Mr. Geo. Knight's, Cothill, for the purpose of hearing addresses from the Rev. Mr. Macdonald, of Blairgowrie, and other ministers, on the subject of the position and prospects of the Church. Now in this parish there resides a

* Dis. Mss. l. pp. 18-21.

Mr. Strachan, who is Sir John Forbes' factor. He commanded the people to go home. As factor he did this, of course. The people refused, and stayed till the ministers came. As the ministers were approaching, they were met at a little distance from the premises where the meeting was to be held by Mr. Strachan and one or two of his friends, whose object it was, now that the meeting could not be prevented by dispersing the audience, to prevent it by sending the ministers away. They first coaxed, which was proper, and then threatened, which was natural, but the ministers did not go back, but went in. They found between two and three hundred individuals waiting to hear them. But hear them they could not. Mr. Strachan, with a large thick stick in his hand, ascended the platform, and began to use all the means he had of making a noise—*i.e.*, to bawl at the pitch of his voice, and strike with his stick as hard as he could. What between the articulate noise from his own head and the inarticulate noise from the head of his stick—the difference between the two being that his head cried, Oh, oh, and the head of his stick cried, Whack, whack—it was impossible for any other voice to be heard than his and his stick's. Three of the members of the deputation went upon the platform and attempted to obtain a hearing, but upon this Mr. Strachan and his stick called in the powerful assistance of Mr. James Crombie, manufacturer, and his stick (if he had one), who is a relative to the family of the minister of the parish (Mr. Crombie, we mean, not his stick), and six other individuals and their sticks, and thus noise was produced sufficient to deafen any voice. An offer was made on the part of the deputation to hear all the men of the party, and we suppose we may say also all the sticks of the party, in regular succession—first, a man and then a stick, then another man and then another stick, till they had all delivered their opinion, upon condition that the members of the deputation should then be heard in turn, and that no man and no stick should interrupt them. This condition the men and the sticks unanimously refused to agree to, and then the men bellowed more beautifully and the sticks beat louder than ever. By this time it was apparent to the members of the deputation that if they remained longer serious consequences were inevitable, owing

to the now excited feelings of many of the parishioners, and therefore the meeting broke up. Mr. Moir and Capt. Shepherd retired into Mr. Knight's dwelling-house, and Messrs. Macdonald and Spence remaining without, and waiting for the chance of an opportunity to address the people. This they partially obtained." *

Even in that district, however, there was one whose appearance made its way to men's hearts amidst all the excitement and hostility which prevailed. Mr. M'Cheyne "accompanied Mr. Alexander, of Kirkcaldy, to visit the districts of Deer and Ellon, districts over which he yearned, for Moderatism had held undisputed sway over them for generations." It was no easy work. During the space of three weeks, he preached and spoke at meetings in four-and-twenty places, sometimes more than once in the same place. On 14th February, he writes: "The weather has been delightful till now, to-day the snow is beginning to drift." On the 24th, he says: "To-day is the first we have rested since leaving home, so that I am almost overcome with fatigue." One who tracked his footsteps a month after his death states that "sympathy with the principles of our suffering Church was awakened in many places; but, above all, a thirst was excited for the pure Word of Life. His eminently holy walk and conversation . . . were specially felt. . . . In one place where a meeting had been intimated the people assembled, resolving to cast stones at him as soon as he should begin to speak, but no sooner had he begun than his manner, his look, his words riveted them all, and they listened with intense earnestness, and before he left the place the people gathered round him, entreating him to stay and preach to them. One man who had cast mud at him was afterwards moved to tears on hearing of his death." †

Such incidents taking place in districts so widely separated

* *Witness*, 25th January, 1843. Dr. Spence, of Aberdeen, states: "The scene described is one of which I have a most vivid recollection, and is literally true, though described in a burlesque style. . . . Unfortunately, I was the only one of the party who had a white neckcloth, . . . and they directed their fury mainly against me."—*In. lit.* 22*nd Nov.*, 1875.

† Memoir, p. 167.

may give some idea of what was going on all over Scotland, but only those who lived through that time can understand the agitation which shook all classes of society, and the struggles and difficulties in the midst of which the cause of the Church had to be maintained.

VII. Close of the Struggle.

It was while men were thus engaged that the answer to the claims of the Church, by the Government and the House of Commons, at last came, and gave a new impulse and direction to the movement. On the 4th of January, Sir James Graham transmitted his celebrated letter, in which the Crown, through its advisers, formally rejected the appeal of the Church, and intimated that Patronage must be maintained in its stringency. The letter was found to contain obvious misrepresentations, such as the allegation that the Claim of the Church was identical with the claims of Popery. It was mortifying to find Government having recourse to such special pleading; but whatever might be thought on this and other points, the hostility of at least one branch of the Legislature was now decisively declared. All that remained was to appeal to Parliament. An extraordinary meeting of the Commission was called for the 31st of January, when it was resolved to petition the House of Commons, and make one final attempt, even at the eleventh hour, to arrest the catastrophe. Mr. Fox Maule having, accordingly, presented this petition, proceeded, on the 7th of March, to move the House for a committee to examine and report on the grievances complained of. With singular ability Mr. Maule and others who followed pled the cause, Mr. Rutherfurd especially signalising the occasion by a masterly argument founded on the laws and constitution of Scotland. With no less singular unanimity did Sir R. Peel, Sir J. Graham and other opponents evade all these grounds of fact and argument, taking refuge in vague generalities and preconceived opinions.* But the vote was decisive. By a majority of 211 against 76 the Claim of the Church was thrown out, the House

* This seems to have struck impartial observers, even when they did not agree with the Church. The distinguished naturalist, Dr. Johnston, of

refusing even to go through the form of an inquiry. "It is not undeserving of notice that of the 37 Scotch Members who were present at the division, 25 voted for Mr. Maule. It was not simply, therefore, the voice of Scotland's Church, but the voice of her national representatives that was that night overborne in the British Parliament. The fact is one which an impartial posterity will mark and remember." *

Had the statesmen of that day known what they were doing, probably some *via media* would have been at least attempted, some temporising expedient to hold parties together, as in subsequent decisions connected with the Church of England. But statesmen in authority had not yet been scared by the effect of their own work in dealing with these Church questions. In 1843, they were told that a little firmness was all that was required. It was only the clergy of Scotland who had to be dealt with, and if the great Tory and Whig parties would combine to bring down all the weight of imperial authority, then, though a few of the leaders of the Church—firebrands they were called—might go out, yet the Evangelical party, as a whole, would succumb. All difficulty would be cleared away, and the great question would be settled.

Beyond all doubt, IT WAS SETTLED. On that memorable 7th of March, earnest eyes from all parts of Scotland had been turned towards the House of Commons. "An eventful night, Mr. M'Cheyne wrote, this in the British Parliament. Once more King Jesus stands at an earthly tribunal, and they know Him not." It was even so. Worldly politicians did their work,

Berwick-on-Tweed, one of the most amiable of men, writes to Dr. Landsborough, of Stevenston: "I have read the discussion in the House of Commons on your kirk question, and the result pained me. You have never since been out of my mind, nor can I dissever your name from Stevenston Manse, though I fear you will be cruel enough to separate from it bodily. I will say nothing, but surely you will allow me to weep at such a stern resolve. . . . So far as I can judge, the speech of Mr. Rutherfurd was never answered, and the arguments of Sir James Graham and Sir Robert Peel were rather of what would be expedient were a new law to be made than a reply to the law of the Church, as established by several solemn Acts."—Memoir of Dr. Landsborough, p. 182.

* Ten Years' Conflict, vol. ii. p. 427.

intelligence was sent forth over Scotland that the final blow had been struck, and it may be interesting to note one or two examples showing how the news was received, not only in cities, but in quiet, rural parishes.

Dr. Landsborough, of Stevenston, thus refers to his service on the succeeding Sabbath: "12th March, 1843.—In the afternoon my discourse was intentionally suited to the peculiar circumstances in which we were placed after the news had come that Parliament had resolved to give us no relief, and that, consequently, we must leave our churches and homes. Oh, may grace be given to us to glorify God in the fires! May the affliction be sanctified to us, to wean us more from the world, and to fit us more for heaven; and do Thou, O God, overrule the trying dispensation for Thine own glory, and for the good of Thy Church and people."*

In the case of Dr. Mackintosh, of Dunoon, then of Tain, we get almost a photograph of one of those who, in their far-off quiet manses, were intently watching the result. "A son of one of his elders, who was but a little boy in that eventful year, and could understand little of what was about to occur, has given us a graphic account of the effect produced on his youthful mind by the minister's demeanour on the morning when tidings came. . . . One morning in the spring of 1843 I jumped early out of bed, for my head was full of marbles and pegtops, and a dozen or so of games before breakfast has its attractions for a schoolboy. To my astonishment, I found my father down before me—nay, he had evidently been there for some time, for the moment I appeared he folded up the newspaper on which he had been so unseasonably engaged, and with a break in his voice, indicating an emotion that was quite unaccountable to me, he asked me to take it at once to the manse, with his compliments to the minister. My visit was shorter than I anticipated, for I had scarcely got out of the sunshine into the manse evergreens when I found the minister in the porch, and when I offered him the newspaper he showed me that he had already got the *Times* by some unusual express, and as he spoke, he patted my head and smiled; but such a

* Memoir, p. 175.

smile! so full of radiant kindness. I was confounded, and as I went back between the hedges, the birds sang unheeded while I thought what could have come over the minister. Had anybody left him a fortune? or had he met one of the Shining Ones walking among the hollies in that early dawn? And it was not for some weeks that I found out that this was what had happened—the newspaper that morning had brought him the vote of the House of Commons finally refusing an inquiry into the affairs of the Scottish Church, and so making it certain that within a few weeks he would leave for ever the home, at the door of which I saw him, in which his father had dwelt before him, and which he now would have to leave without stipend, and not knowing what was before him. Of course, he came out."*

The feeling of gladness thus expressed it was not difficult to understand. Men were thankful that the path of duty had at last been made so plain. The fear had been that Government, as Dr. Guthrie says, "would bring in a Bill which, if it won't please us, will be made so as if possible to entrap us." It was the only danger which threatened to separate between brethren, and so make shipwreck of the cause. The refusal of Parliament even to go through the form of an inquiry put an end to all such anxiety. It was an unspeakable relief to be delivered from all harassing suspense, and to find that God had in His goodness made the way so plain, that he who ran might read. All that remained was to make ready.

While this was going on, it must not be supposed that the Moderate party, on their side, were idle. In 1841 they had already gone to Government and asked them definitely to make their choice as to whether they or their opponents were to be the Church of the nation. They knew that they were themselves safe in making this conclusive appeal to Government, and their application, therefore, was merely a request for the expulsion of Dr. Chalmers and his friends. The Government, however, declined to move.

At last the Stewarton decision, casting out the *quoad sacra* ministers, put a weapon into eager hands which was at once

* Memoir, p. 56.

used, not only to hasten, but to antedate the Disruption. Without waiting till the decree became final—for the question of appeal was pending when Dr. Cook, at the Commission, gave the signal—they proceeded to break up Presbyteries and Synods. At the first meeting of the Presbytery of Irvine, for example, they moved the expulsion of the *quoad sacra* ministers; and when the vote went against them, they rose in a body, left the Court, with Dr. Norman Macleod at their head, held a separate meeting, and constituted a rival Presbytery. Dr. Bryce, their historian, admits, rather boastfully, that this was in "thorough contempt of all ecclesiastical authority." In Moderate Presbyteries and Synods, where the vote went the other way, the Evangelical party refused to abandon their brethren, and had in self-defence to take a similar course. Already in her essential Courts the Church was broken up; but it should be noticed that it was the Moderate party—the men who ultimately formed the Establishment—who took the initiative, and Dr. Bryce is anxious that the glory of the first step should be reserved for those to whom it is due, the Presbytery of Fordyce.

These parting scenes, when men went asunder never again to reunite, were often striking, and in some cases painful.

At Linlithgow, when Dr. Bell moved the expulsion of his *quoad sacra* brethren, "It was mine," says Mr. Taylor, of Grangemouth, "to reply; and although I rose with a faltering tongue, this being my first endeavour to express my views in a Church Court, I was yet enabled to speak in defence of my position to the approbation of my brethren. I challenged Dr. Bell to discuss the question as a Doctor of Divinity, and not to skulk behind the decision of a Law Court. With the ecclesiastical functions of a minister the Law Courts had nothing to do, either constitutionally or scripturally. The Church, upon scriptural and presbyterian grounds, had given me my standing as a member of Court, and upon these grounds I was prepared to maintain my position."* For an onlooker it must have been interesting to observe the silence with which this challenge was received, and the way in which the motion was allowed to drop.

* Dis. Mss. xxxvii. p. 3

At Glasgow, when Principal Macfarlane moved the expulsion of his *quoad sacra* brethren, Mr. Arnot demanded that, if this were done, they should come to St. Peter's and remove one-half of the ordination vow which they had laid on him when he was taken bound to exercise discipline in his congregation through means of his kirk-session. It must have been a remarkable thing to observe the way in which this demand was ignored.

In the Synod of Dumfries the proposal of the Moderate party was carried by vote, and only they who knew the personal attachment of the two brothers here referred to can understand the scene :—"Previous to the great Disruption, Synods felt the shock. Hot words had passed in that of Dumfries, and those who ultimately became Free Churchmen arose and left the Synod. Dr. Duncan sat still, with his face covered, till the bustle of departure was over; then rose and took leave of his old associates with the meekness of wisdom which belonged to him. His poor, dear brother, still minister of the New Church [Established], Dumfries, who had never in life before parted from him, laid his head on the table and sobbed aloud, and many were moved."

* Dis. Mss. xvi. p. 4.

VIII. Making Ready.

Meantime the loud note of preparation was being sounded over the land. From the 7th of March till the 18th of May the weeks were few enough for 474 ministers, and a still larger number of congregations, to get ready. But not a moment was lost. A committee of the most distinguished ministers, and not a few of Scotland's ablest laymen, met daily at headquarters. Plans were matured, agents commissioned to organise the parishes, and a series of weekly "communications" sent out, and so eagerly welcomed, that an impression of 150,000 copies sometimes failed to meet the demand. As we look back on the movements of that stirring time, there is one whose well-remembered form is seen for ever coming to the front. It was the voice of Dr. Chalmers, which was heard all over Scotland, rousing the country; and it was the impetuous energy which he threw into every department that carried all before it. In these efforts he was looking far beyond a mere provision for himself and his outgoing brethren to a still nobler object, now fully in view. At last, after long waiting, the prospect had fairly dawned of Church extension in a form far different from what he had expected. "I knocked at the door of a Whig Ministry, and they refused to endow. I then knocked at the door of a Tory Ministry. They perhaps would have endowed, but they offered to enslave. I now, therefore, turn aside from both, and knock at the door of the general population." Here at last was the prospect of realising what had been the lifelong, eager desire of his heart; and with indomitable ardour he gathered up his strength for the great achievement. "Dr. Chalmers," says Dr. Guthrie, "has a kind of desperate joy in the prospect of an overthrow, in the idea that some four or five hundred churches would be built."

One of the speeches which he delivered deserves special notice, on account of two watchwords then given forth, the effects of which it would be difficult to over-estimate.

The first was a demand for "a penny a-week." A penny a-week from every family in Scotland, he announced, would serve to equip the Church, and provide ordinances over the land. Men were startled. Were we to have a Free Church, delivered from all these conflicts and trammels, with such men as Chalmers, and Candlish, and Gordon at its head, and was the sacrifice to be no more than this? But how could such a thing be? "People say," he exclaimed, "A penny a-week! that is utterly insignificant to the wants of the Church. How can you possibly transmute a penny a-week into the basis of the support of a Church which has for its object the Christian instruction of one and all the families of the land? Is it possible that a penny a-week can work such a marvel? Just as possible as that the successive strokes of the chisel should raise the pyramids of Egypt." And then followed the calculation on which this was founded.

The second watchword was more important still: Organise—organise—organise! "The time for argument is now over; the time for action has come. We have entered on a new era of deeds, which has followed the era of speeches. . . . O'Connell gave forth his watchword: Agitate—agitate—agitate! . . . Sir Robert Peel gave forth his watchword: Register—register—register! . . . Scotland seeks the Christian freedom of her Church, and the Christian good of her people; and to make out this let *her* watchword be: Organise—organise—organise! . . . We confess our main dependence to be on the prayers of the Christian people of the land, but we also know that prayer does not supersede either efforts or wisdom. Therefore I repeat, Organise—organise—organise! and without the objects of the demagogue on the one hand, or the statesman on the other, let us not cease our endeavours till, by the blessing of God, the country in which we live becomes a sacred land of light and liberty—a portion of that greatest and best of empires, the empire of truth and righteousness."

The cry thus raised was in reality a call for the forming of

local associations, in which parishes might combine for raising funds, preparing temporary accommodation, and arranging permanently for the future. Church Defence Associations had been formed at an earlier period, but Free Church Associations had now to take their place, and very cordial was the response given to this appeal. Already, on March 15th, the Church Defence Association at Woodside, Aberdeen, as Mr. Forbes states, was dissolved, for two reasons—viz., 1*st*, Because the attempt which had been made to defend the Church from the encroachments of the civil power had failed; and 2*ndly*, "Because the Church as established by law, as its constitution was interpreted by the civil powers, *was not worth defending*. The spiritual province was invaded, the Headship of Christ denied, and the people trampled on and enslaved." Accordingly, "on Wednesday, the 15th March, a meeting was held, at which an association was formed for the support of a Free Presbyterian Church in Scotland."* Similar movements were common over the country. By the 19th of April 405 associations had been reported, and at the meeting of the Assembly the number had risen to 687. One of the earliest to respond to the appeal of Dr. Chalmers was Mr. M'Cheyne, of Dundee. "We are proposing," he wrote on the 7th of March, "to organise for the support of a Free Presbyterian Church." He asked the aid of Mr. Makgill Crichton at a meeting to be held on the following Tuesday. "All the accommodation of my humble dwelling is, of course, at your service." The meeting was held, and the association formed. Mr. M'Cheyne was heard "pleading fervently the cause of the Free Presbyterian Church." It was his last service—his work was done, he went home and lay down to die; and there were many in Scotland whose attachment to the cause of the Free Church was all the deeper from the fact that his latest public testimony was borne so earnestly on its behalf.

And now, as the day approached, the question began to be everywhere keenly debated—how many ministers would really go out? Nothing in all this history was more remarkable than the utter incredulity of opponents as to any large number

* Dis. Mss. xxvii. p. 3.

standing true to their word. There was, perhaps, an excuse for some measure of doubt, owing to the signs of faltering which had appeared in certain quarters. In May, 1842, an unfortunate attempt had been made to break up the Evangelical party by a band of waverers, who came forward in the Synod of Glasgow, saying, We are *forty;* a movement really insignificant, but which made it more easy for politicians and others to believe what they wished to believe. Even after the Convocation, there were some proceedings which might well have strengthened the impression, and of these we give one example—the account of a meeting of Presbytery at Linlithgow, as described by Mr. Taylor.

"Our Presbytery of Linlithgow, at its meeting (March), secured for itself the inglorious pre-eminence of being the first Presbytery in the Church to flinch in the prospect of danger, to reverse its majority, and thus to lead in the unprincipled retreat. Our little Presbytery room was crowded, there being a large muster of members and a goodly company of onlookers. . . . The great question was introduced by Mr.——of ——, who moved an overture to the General Assembly for the repeal of the Veto Act. He had hitherto been a very forward supporter of reformation measures, and had advocated the overtures for giving efficacy to the call. At all public meetings in Edinburgh for Church-reform he was present. But recent events had altered his views. His speech was carefully prepared. It was written out and laid before him, and was delivered with that forced and vehement oratory which showed that the chief opponent with whom he had to contend was the conviction of his own heart. He has, since the Disruption, got the reward of his unfaithfulness, in being preferred to the desirable parish of ——. Mr. Laing, of Livingstone, replied, and replied effectively. But the most effective speech was Mr. Martin's, of Bathgate, wherein, before the vote was taken, he reviewed the debate and the argument, and the altered position of the speakers. It was more than eloquent; but vain is every appeal to men bent on following not what their convictions but what their interests suggest.* I

* Mr. Martin, in a letter written at the time, himself refers to the part he took in this discussion. "The burden of the debate . . . fell on me. As I expected it would be so, I let them all speak before I rose; but,

remember distinctly, as if it were yesterday, the humbled appearance of the brethren who now openly disavowed their former principles. Mr. ——, of ——, sat silent, but voted right against his former party. Mr. ——, of ——, betrayed his folly by attempting an explanation. Poor Mr. ——, of ——, hung down his head, as if in agony of spirit, and refused to give a vote. Mr. ——, of ——, who in a fit of extreme haste had written Sir Robert Peel to say that if a right settlement were not soon given to the principles for which the Church was contending, he must resign his connection with it, and who got for answer that so soon as he resigned, Government would be prepared to present a successor to him; had a printed paper, which he circulated among the members, wherein he attempted to justify his remaining in the Church from the example of great men in former days. Mr. ——, of ——, said that much as he valued the Veto, he was not prepared to peril the Church's endowments for it. Mr. ——, of ——, a sort of Presbyterian Puseyite, though a good man, contended for his own favourite dogma, which was, that all the affairs of the Church were managed absolutely by the [Church] rulers, and that the only duty devolving on Church members was that of entire submission. Mr. ——, of ——, whom, as my copresbyter, I chiefly regretted leaving in the Establishment, fell the victim of his own timidity and irresolution, and urged it as a reason for repealing the Veto, that we were only putting ourselves in a favourable position for getting Government's sanction to some other preferable measure.* By

truly, as man after man renounced his principles, amid many shameful pretences of maintaining them, it was not indignation I felt, but sorrow; and I never rose to speak, I believe, sadder or sicker at heart. I spoke long, and demolished, I think, every vestige of argument, . . . yet did not use an angry or bitter word. I do confess it was difficult to keep off."—Life, p. 114.

* This was a vain idea, because the cases of intrusion—Mr. Young's, at Auchterarder, and the others—would have had to be carried out in the meantime by a series of forced settlements. In such things the Church could take no part. Besides, Lord Aberdeen's Act was all that men in authority were prepared to give—an Act which, by common consent, had to be thrown aside as an intolerable burden. It was only the existence of the Free Church which ultimately forced those in authority to go further.

a majority of votes was the overture carried, and by this *black act* was the first note of faint-heartedness and treachery sounded within the ranks of the Church." *

But not in Church Courts only were such things going on. All over the country private efforts were being made to work on men's selfish hopes and fears, no agents being more zealous than those who had themselves deserted their colours. For honourable men one of the heaviest trials of that time was the breaking down and failure of former friends, whose principles had not been able to withstand the pressure.

When the day drew near, accordingly, estimates were being formed among all ranks of society as to the number of those who would go out; and, probably, men put their estimates at a higher or lower figure in proportion as their own sense of the importance of the principles at stake was high or low.

It is strange to observe how incapable the Moderate party as a whole were of estimating the position of affairs. In a manifesto, issued on the 1st of March, 1843, and signed by Principal Macfarlane, they assured the Government that they looked without apprehension to the threatened Disruption of the Church. "Its office-bearers may in SOME instances be changed, and a FEW of its lay members be withdrawn FOR A TIME, but the tempest will soon pass over."

Dr. Cumming, of London, who has had much experience in prognosticating future events, was very confident in this case. "I venture, on pretty accurate information, to assert that less than one hundred will cover the whole secession. . . . But I am not satisfied that any will secede." † He was certain that more than three-fourths, probably the whole of his brethren, would prove false to their pledges.

Even in Scotland, amid the preparation and bustle that was going on, many were equally in ignorance. Mr. Grant, of Ayr, states: "On my way to the General Assembly, one of the principal bankers in Ayr was in the railway carriage with me. The conversation naturally turned to the state of the Church. Turning to me, he offered to bet £5 that not forty would come

* Dis. Mss. xxxvii. p. 4.

† Quoted in Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers, vol. iv. p. 334.

out. I answered that I never betted, but that if he were to make his forty four hundred, and if I were to take it, his £5 would be mine in three days." *

In Edinburgh they were just as little aware of what was coming. "Mark my words," wrote one of the best-informed and most sagacious citizens of Edinburgh a day or two before the Disruption, "not forty of them will go out." †

With similar anticipations, the Marquis of Bute, as Royal Commissioner, arrived at Holyrood, and nothing shows more strikingly how little the best-informed politicians knew what they were doing than a fact which has been recorded by Mr. Dunlop. In the circle at the Palace, on the evening of the 17th, within a few hours of the Disruption, the calculation was that the number who would separate would be between twenty and thirty.‡ One circumstance, if they had only been aware of it, would have opened their eyes. Already the Evangelical party had been in conference, arranging for the final step, and that forenoon (the 17th) the Protest which Dr. Welsh was to lay on the table of the Assembly, renouncing the Establishment, had been signed by 400 ministers.§

Preparation, also, for a place of meeting had been completed at Tanfield, near Canonmills, one of the suburbs of Edinburgh. The hall there, after being built for other purposes, was occupied as a wareroom; and when visited by Mr. Dunlop in February the wide floor, with its piles of boxes, wore an "aspect of coldness and deadness." Hurriedly seated and fitted up, it now stood ready to give accommodation to fully 3000 people. On one side was a spacious platform, with its blue drapery in front, while on either hand, to right and left of the great area, the benches rose on a gentle slope. The roof was low, but, to the delight of all, the acoustics of the place were found to be perfect—speakers with even the weakest voice being heard with ease.

* Dis. Mss. xli. p. 2.
† Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers, vol. iv. p. 335.
‡ Memoir of Dr. Welsh, p. 103.
§ Including signatures to a paper of concurrence.

IX. The Disruption.

At last the decisive day arrived—the 18th of May. Business in Edinburgh was for the most part suspended, and all along the streets there was general excitement, as if men felt themselves in presence of some great event. Already, at break of day, an eager crowd besieged the doors of St. Andrew's Church, where the Assembly was to meet; and no sooner were they opened than every inch of space available for the public was densely crowded.* There had been numerous arrivals from all parts of Scotland, and even from abroad. Dr. Stewart,—then of Erskine,—for example, who had been ordered for his health to the south of Europe, tells how he arrived just in time to take part in the proceedings: "I had to leave my family in London, and hurried down by mail-coach and rail to Edinburgh, to be present at the Disruption—arriving from Constantinople by uninterrupted travelling at four o'clock on the morning of that eventful day."†

The opening scene was at Holyrood, where, as usual, the Lord High Commissioner held his levee, while "the yearly gleam of royalty was flickering about the old grim turrets." Never had the reception-rooms of the Palace been more densely crowded, for those who were about to abandon the Establishment sought all the more to testify their abiding loyalty.

"Being a member for the last time," says Mr. Lewis, of

* Mr. Kerr, of H.M. Office of Works, who was placed in charge of the preparation of St. Andrew's Church, states: "On the evening of the 17th, when about to lock up the church for the night, we were informed that the door-keepers, who had duplicate keys, had been offered considerable sums of money to allow parties to occupy the pews all night. . . . Padlocks were put on the doors to prevent the duplicate keys being used." Next morning when the public were admitted they "were very orderly and quiet; and, indeed, so obliging, that ultimately the greater number stood up in the pews, and allowed the seat-boards to be filled by others standing on them."—Dis. Mss. lii.

† Parker Mss., Pres. of Greenock.

Dundee, "of the General Assembly of the Established Church in May, 1843, I was in Edinburgh on the appointed day, and attended the levee of Her Majesty's Commissioner, the Marquis of Bute, anxious to show our loyalty to Cæsar when about to give to Christ the things that belong to Christ. While crowding the ante-room, and waiting the opening of the door, the portrait of William III., oddly enough, gave way, and seemed about to fall, some one, as we tried to prop it up, exclaiming, 'There goes the Revolution Settlement!'* an incident which, a hundred years earlier, had been interpreted as one of evil omen and warning; but, like other omens, it came too late to be of much use." †

At the close of the levee, shortly after noon, the Commissioner entered his carriage; the procession, with its military escort, moved round by the Calton Hill, up the North Bridge, and on to the High Church, where sermon was preached by Dr. Welsh, the retiring Moderator, from the words: "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

"The discourse," says Dr. James Hamilton, "was a production which, for wise and weighty casuistry, for keen analysis of motives, and fine discrimination of truth, and for felicity of historic illustrations, would have been a treat to such a congregation at a less eventful season. With the solemn consciousness that in the full persuasion of their own minds, they had decided in another hour to take a step in which character, and worldly comfort, and ministerial usefulness were all involved, each sentence came with a sanction which such sermons seldom carry." ‡

Service being over, men hurried along the streets and through the gathering crowds to St. Andrew's Church. Outside, the spacious street was an impressive spectacle, with its masses of eager spectators, while inside the Church the dense crowd, after long hours of suspense, were intently waiting for the issue.

"I was one of the first," says Dr. M'Lauchlan, "who made his way from the High Church, where Dr. Welsh preached, to

* "The voice was that of William Howison Craufurd, Esq. of Craufurdland, the representative of one of Scotland's oldest families, and an unflinching supporter of the Church of 1690." — Ten Years' Conflict, vol. ii. p. 434.

† Parker Mss., Pres. of Dundee.

‡ Farewell to Egypt, p. 7.

St. Andrew's Church, where the Assembly met. When I entered the seats on the Evangelical side were almost all empty. On the Moderate side they were quite full, with Dr. Cook in front—the ministers from that side not having been at the sermon. I sat beside Dr. John Smyth, of Glasgow. The galleries were packed full, and soon the whole house was crowded. When silence followed the rush of members, as we waited for the Moderator and Commissioner, I turned to Dr. Smyth. His eyes were full of tears, and he remarked, 'This is too much.'" *

It was about half-past two o'clock, or rather later, when Dr. Welsh was seen to enter and take the chair. Soon after there was heard the measured tramp of the soldiery outside, and the swell of martial music, with the sounds of the Queen's Anthem, announcing the approach of the Commissioner, and almost immediately he appeared and took the Throne, the whole assembly rising to receive him. When Dr. Welsh presented himself to the house all the hesitancy which often marked his speaking had left him. "He was firm and collected," writes his friend, Mr. Dunlop, "very pale, but full of dignity, as one about to do a great deed—and of elevation, from the consciousness that he was doing it for the cause of Christ." In solemn and fitting words the opening prayer was offered, and then a stillness as of death fell over the great assembly. Men held their breath—"every heart vibrated with a strange awe."

Again Dr. Welsh rose. "Fathers and Brethren," he said, and his voice sounded clear to the furthest limits of the great audience, "according to the usual form of procedure, this is the time for making up the roll, but in consequence of certain proceedings affecting our rights and privileges—proceedings which have been sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government, and by the Legislature of the country; and more especially in respect that there has been an infringement on the liberties of our Constitution, so that we could not now constitute this Court without a violation of the terms of the Union between Church and State in this land, as now authoritatively declared—I must protest against our proceeding further. The reasons that have led me to come to this conclusion are fully set forth in the docu-

* Dis. Mss. xlix. p. 9.

ment which I hold in my hand, and which, with permission of the House, I shall now proceed to read."

Then followed the memorable Protest, in which, after briefly stating the sacred principles for which the Church had contended, the encroachments by which her spiritual powers had been overthrown, and the impossibility of constituting the Assembly under such Erastian conditions, it was declared:

"We protest that, in the circumstances in which we are placed, it is and shall be lawful for us, and such other Commissioners chosen to the Assembly, appointed to have been this day holden, as may concur with us, to withdraw to a separate place of meeting, for the purpose of taking steps, along with all who adhere to us—maintaining with us the Confession of Faith and Standards of the Church of Scotland as heretofore understood—for separating in an orderly way from the Establishment, and thereupon adopting such measures as may be competent to us, in humble dependence on God's grace and the aid of the Holy Spirit, for the advancement of His glory, the extension of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, and the administration of the affairs of Christ's house according to His Holy Word; and we now withdraw accordingly, humbly and solemnly acknowledging the hand of the Lord in the things which have come upon us because of our manifold sins, and the sins of this Church and nation, but, at the same time, with an assured conviction that we are not responsible for any consequences that may follow from this, our enforced separation from an Establishment which we loved and prized, through interference with conscience, the dishonour done to Christ's crown, and the rejection of His sole and supreme authority as King in His Church."

With these closing words, the Moderator laid the Protest on the table—lifted his hat—turned to the Commissioner, who had risen—and bowed respectfully to the representative of Royalty, an act which seemed to many as if the true old Church of Scotland were then and there bidding farewell to the State which had turned a deaf ear to her appeals. Leaving the chair, Dr. Welsh moved toward the door, and Dr. Chalmers, who all the time had been close at his side, was seen eagerly following, along with Dr. Gordon, Dr. M'Farlan, Dr. Macdonald, and the other occupants of the bench in front.

At the sight of the movement, a loud cheer—but only for a moment—burst from the gallery. At once it was hushed, for the solemnity and sympathy were too deep for such a mode of expression, and silence again fell over the house, as all were eagerly gazing at the seats to the left of the chair. It was a sight never to be forgotten, as man after man rose, without hurry or confusion, and bench after bench was left empty, and the vacant space grew wider as ministers and elders poured out in long procession.

Outside in the street, the great mass of spectators had long been waiting in anxious anticipation, and when at last the cry rose, "They come! they come!" and when Dr. Welsh, Dr. Chalmers, and Dr. Gordon appeared in sight, the sensation, as they came forth, went like an electric shock through the vast multitude, and the long, deep shout which rang along the street told that the deed had been done. No arrangement had been made for a procession, for the strong wish of the ministers was to avoid all display. But there was no choice. On either hand the crowd drew back, opening out a lane wide enough to allow of three, or at most four, walking abreast. And so in steady ranks the procession moved on its way, while all around they were met with expressions of the deepest emotion.

The writer of this was not a member of Assembly, but in that part of the House allotted to ministers not members he was in a favourable position, where all that went on could be fully seen. After the movement had been made, he remained for some time, side by side with Dr. Horatius Bonar, to witness the departure of friends, and especially to note the effect on the Moderate party who remained behind. At first, Dr. Cook and his friends were all complacency, but as the full extent of the Disruption began to disclose itself, there came an expression of perplexity, which in not a few instances seemed to deepen into bewilderment and dismay.

On leaving the church and falling into the line of procession, it was evident that amidst the crowd the first sensation was over, though tears were seen in many eyes, and other signs of emotion could be observed. But what showed most strikingly the magnitude of the movement was the view from that point

THE PROCESSION ON THE 18TH OF MAY.

in George Street where you look down the long vista toward Tanfield, and where one unbroken column was seen, stretching, amidst numerous spectators, all the way till lost in the distance.

But now we turn to the Disruption Mss. to note what personal reminiscences there may be of a day on which men were sacrificing their all.

Some record little else than the names of the friends with whom they went forth side by side as comrades in the hour of trial. Mr. Flyter, of Alness, says: "I walked down in procession to Tanfield in company with Dr. Smyttan, late of Bombay, and General Munro of Teaninich."* Mr. Dodds, of Humbie, records: "I walked down in procession to Canonmills along with my venerable father-in-law, Dr. Duncan, of Ruthwell, Dr. Henry Grey, of St. Mary's, Edinburgh, and my brother-in-law, Mr. George John Duncan, of Kirkpatrick-Durham."†

"The Rev. Nathaniel Paterson, D.D.; his brother the Rev. Walter Paterson; and Dr. Landsborough (Stevenston) walked arm-in-arm. What noble heads and fine countenances the three presented! Here were original genius; accurate scholarship, with varied accomplishments; and fine taste, with scientific learning. The three had in boyish days wandered together by the banks of the Ken; and now, when time had whitened their heads with the snow of age, they walked together in this memorable procession, being, by God's grace, willing to sacrifice all for the glory of that Saviour who had redeemed them with His blood."‡

Dr. Burns, of Kilsyth, goes more fully into detail: "On that memorable day, after hearing the sermon by the lamented Welsh, the writer of this walked over to St. Andrew's Church in company with a faithful man, Mr. Thomson, of Dysart. Ere he was aware, he found himself in what has been called the Moderate side of the Assembly, and was saluted by one of the Evangelicals who remained, as if he had been with them. The countenances of some old Moderates near him were very expressive of mingled astonishment and sorrow. On making egress from the house of bondage among the first, and being on the

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Dingwall. † Dis. Mss. xxxiii.

‡ Memoir of Dr. Landsborough, p. 176.

side next the street leading down to the new Assembly Hall, he was very near the front of the procession, being joined by [his] brother, Dr. George Burns, of Tweedsmuir, and by [his] son, W. C. Burns. It was doubtless a solemn, yet felt to be a noble and soul-stirring scene. The day was clear, and the path of duty equally so. The Lord was with us, and assuredly the best by far of the Scottish Church. The incubus of Moderatism and secularity seemed to be shaken off; and though legal stipend was now gone, away also went bonds, and horn, and poind. Truly, it has been the exodus from Egypt." *

Mr. Kerr, of H.M. Office of Works, being in charge of St. Andrew's Church, remained after Dr. Welsh and his friends had left. He states that "in the course of about twenty minutes there did not remain inside the church above one hundred human beings." † Looking at such a sight, what could men think but that it was the Church of Scotland which had gone out?

Of the procession Mr. Dunlop says: "True and great dignity and moral power impressed awe, which spoke in the silent language of respectful observance; and every now and then, as some more venerable father, or some tried champion of the cause, passed down, might be seen a head uncovered and bent in quiet reverence." ‡ This struck Mr. Duncan, of Kirkpatrick-Durham, as "the deepest touch of all, showing that earnest solemnity and the spirit of prayer had its place in the gazing throng." "There were hats raised from venerable heads, and words such as these dropped into the ears of the passing ministers: 'The Lord be with you!' 'God guide you!' 'May He strengthen you and bear you through!'"

"Here and there, as the child or wife of some outgoing minister caught sight of a husband or father's form, accomplishing an act which was to leave his family homeless and unprovided, warm tear-drops formed, which, as if half-ashamed of them, the hand of faith was in haste to wipe away." §

And sometimes, under the impulse of the moment, there were yet more demonstrative expressions of feeling. As Dr.

* Dis. Mss. xxix. p. 8. † *Ibid.* lii.

‡ Memoir of Dr. Welsh, p. 110.

§ Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers, vol. iv. p. 339.

Landsborough moved in the procession, "an aged minister was a little ahead of him. On a sudden the crowd broke, and a young lady sprang forward and caught the hand of the venerable servant of God, raised it up, and kissed it, and then, allowing it to drop, fell back into the crowd; while the old man seemed so much occupied with his own thoughts as scarcely to have noticed what had been done." *

Nor were such feelings confined to those who were out on the street. "Elsewhere in the city, Lord Jeffrey was sitting reading in his quiet room, when one burst in upon him, saying, 'Well, what do you think of it? More than four hundred of them are actually out!' The book was flung aside, and, springing to his feet, Lord Jeffrey exclaimed, 'I am proud of my country. There is not another country upon earth where such a deed could have been done.'" †

The hall at Tanfield had, from an early hour, been crowded by an audience bound together by common sympathies, and anxiously waiting the result. Long hours had passed, and when a shout from the outside announced the appearance of the procession, the excitement grew intense. At last they entered—not only the well-known champions of the cause, but rank after rank the ministers and elders came pouring in, till all the allotted space was filled; and when friend after friend was recognised, there came from the audience an irrepressible outburst of feeling which carried all before it, and found expression in acclamations and tears.

The opening prayer of Dr. Welsh was an outpouring of devout and holy feeling, which moved every heart in a way never to be forgotten. In proceeding to elect a Moderator, all eyes turned at once to Dr. Chalmers, and at the mention of his name by Dr. Welsh, the whole Assembly rose and broke forth in enthusiastic applause. When he came in and took the chair a singular incident occurred. A heavy passing cloud had for a time cast a gloom over the Assembly, and when Dr. Chalmers rose to give out the opening Psalm, "O send thy light forth

* Memoir of Dr. Landsborough, p. 179.

† Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers, vol. iv. p. 339.

and thy truth, let them be guides to me," the cloud suddenly broke, the full sunlight came pouring through the windows, brightening the scene, and "there were some who thought of Dr. Chalmers' text but six months before, Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." The opening address which followed was worthy of the occasion, vindicating the position of the Free Church, and defining the place she was to occupy.

Thus, with feelings of indescribable relief and thankfulness, the first sederunt of the Free Assembly was brought to a close. Every single step during the anxious hours of that day had been in perfect keeping with the momentous character of the event. Many a heart looked up in gratitude to God for strength in the hour of trial—the feeling which Dr. Landsborough, with expressive abruptness, wrote down at the time in his brief journal of the Disruption day: "Remained till six o'clock. Exceeding order. Halleluiah! I shall never see the like till heaven."*

Such feelings were not confined to Edinburgh. Over all Scotland, far away from the scene of action, there were many thousands of quiet homes in which anxious hearts were eagerly awaiting the tidings. "It was a time," says Mr. Taylor, of Flisk, "of unutterable anxiety, and prayer was the only relief. Eli-like, we watched and thought that they were happiest who were engaged actually in the work. Diligence itself seemed lazy until we got the newspaper which told that the act was done, and, by the blessing of God, nobly done. With a full heart we read the account, and by some of the speeches were affected to tears." †

Thus, also, it was with the aged Dr. Ross, of Lochbroom: "When the papers containing the news of the Disruption arrived, with streams of joyous tears flowing down his cheeks, he, Simeon-like, praised God that he was spared to see the day on which such an event took place, and repeatedly offered his '*Nunc dimittis.*' "‡

* Memoir, p. 173. † Dis. Mss. xxxvii. pp. 9, 10.

‡ Parker Mss., Pres. of Lochcarron.

X. The Free Assembly.

The deed of the 18th of May having been thus completed, the members of Assembly at once set themselves to arrange for the building of churches, providing ministerial support, and all else that was required in their new position. With what sagacity and business-talent these affairs were adjusted has been shown by the results. But it seems impossible to avoid the conviction that the guidance and blessing of God were specially present with those who in a time of need were seeking the best methods by which to develop the resources of His Church. From the 18th to the 30th of May was a period of earnest work, into the details of which it is not for us here to enter.

Perhaps the most impressive act was the public signing of the Deed of Demission, a formal legal paper by which the emoluments and position of the Establishment were finally surrendered. This was done on Tuesday, the 23rd, in presence of a vast audience who hung in silence on the scene. Dr. M'Farlan, of Greenock, whose living was the richest in Scotland, appropriately led the way. Special interest attached to the appearance of some of the more aged ministers—to Dr. Muirhead, of Cramond, for example, who was ordained in 1788, when Moderatism was in the zenith of its power; and Dr. Sommerville, of Drumelzier, whose few theological writings, apologetical and doctrinal, had been of rare excellence, and who came forward with feeble steps, leaning on the arm of his son, but firm in his determination to give that testimony for Christ. It was altogether a memorable spectacle—ministers in one day signing away more than £100,000 a-year, "a Church disestablishing herself."

The number of the names affixed, including subsequent adherences, was 474. In November, 480 ministers (also including subsequent adherences) had pledged themselves that if the Government gave no relief, they must abandon the Establishment. For six months many an attempt had been made to tempt or terrify them, but when in May the day of trial came, the whole band, their numbers hardly diminished, stood in unbroken ranks. Not that the men were in all cases the same. Too many of the loudest talkers had been found faithless, but for every man who failed, another who had said little was ready to step forward and take his place; and so in the view of the world, the honour of the Church was intact, and her fidelity to the cause of Christ was openly vindicated.

In the proceedings of the Assembly much prominence was given to the cause of missions. It was evident that the Church would have to struggle hard for existence at home, but not for a moment was the work of missions allowed to fall into a secondary place. Two days after the movement to Tanfield the Assembly was already calling on Dr. Keith, of St. Cyrus, to report on the mission to the Jews, and often in after days has that distinguished minister dwelt with delight on the thought that it was "to the *Jew* first" the Free Church turned her regards, believing in the promise, "I will bless them that bless thee."

The whole missionary work at home and abroad was arranged in the full expectation that all the labourers in the mission-field would adhere to the Free Church. It was one of the most signal testimonies ever given to her principles when the entire missionary staff belonging to the Establishment, without a single exception, gave in their adherence. They were far removed from the din of controversy or the stir of public assemblies, and had in no way committed themselves. They might well have thought that a Church stripped of her temporalities, and having everything to provide for herself, would be little able to take the additional burden of all the missions. But not for a moment did they hesitate. The same faith and self-sacrifice which led them at first into the mission-field guided them once more. The cause of the Free Church was for them

the cause of Christ. They renounced the Establishment, and cast in their lot with their out-going brethren.

Thus the meeting of the Assembly passed away—a bright blessed time of unbroken brotherly love, of intellectual elevation and spiritual enlargement, the happy memories of which the men who took part in it can never cease to cherish.

XI. Farewell Service in the Parish Church.

The great crisis, then, was over. The crowded meetings, overflowing with joyful enthusiasm, had to be left behind, and men parted to go home and meet, as best they might, the exertions and privations consequent on what had been done. Then it was that, in many a solitary country parish, on returning to manses and churches no longer their own, the true nature of the trial was fully realised.

"It was my privilege," says Dr. Hanna, referring to the country ministers, the real sufferers of the Disruption, "to know one of these men, the father of a large family. He came into Edinburgh, signed the Deed of Demission, and set out—it was a long day's journey—to travel home on foot to that family whose home and whose support he had signed away. He entered a house by the wayside. As he crossed its threshold, the remembrance flashed suddenly upon him that it was thirty years since he had entered that door, going into Edinburgh to College, a solitary and friendless youth. Quickly upon that memory the thought of piety linked itself. 'The God,' said he to himself, 'who has hitherto guided me and mine these thirty years, will not forsake me now.' His faith in his Heavenly Father put fresh strength into his heart, and he went on his way with a light and elastic step." *

Before leaving Edinburgh, a general understanding had been come to, that there should be no farewell sermons, no formal taking leave of the parish churches. The intensity of feeling was already so deep that it was deemed best to avoid adding to the excitement. In towns, and among the leading congregations, this understanding was generally acted on, but each minister

* The Church and its Living Head, by Rev. Dr. Hanna, pp. 23, 24.

was left to judge for himself, and, as some of the brethren resolved to hold a parting service, it is right to notice the accounts which they have themselves given of these scenes.

For the most part they are very quietly referred to. "On the 11th of June I preached for the last time in the Established church which I had occupied for twenty-eight years, taking for a text in the Gaelic, Micah ii. and 10, 'Arise ye and depart, for this is not your rest;' and in the English, Hebrews xiii. and 13, 'Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.' I may remark here, that this text in Hebrews occurred to me with particular force just as I joined the procession in George Street, on the day of the Disruption, and by the comforting impression then made on my own mind, I was led to address my congregation from it in taking leave of the church." *

At Flisk, Mr. Taylor's statement is brief: "On the next Sabbath I took farewell of the Establishment, in a sermon on Rev. iii. 11, 'Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.' I formally stated my reason for the decided step. The church was very full. There was deep silence and solemnity, and some were in tears." †

Mr. Davidson, of Latheron, gives no account of his sermon, but says: "I took the opportunity of explaining to my congregation what had taken place, . . . and my own altered situation in consequence, asking them to make up their minds deliberately and prayerfully as to the course they should adopt in circumstances so solemn. At the same time, I intimated a meeting of session for next day, in order to afford the elders an opportunity of declaring their sentiments. . . . I pronounced the benediction and left the pulpit, where I had been privileged to minister, however unworthily, for the long period of twenty-three years. That I did so with a heavy heart may readily be conceived, believing as I did that in all probability I should never enter it again. In this feeling the congregation very deeply shared, for many of them seemed affected to tears on leaving the church." ‡

* Mr. Mackenzie, of Farr, Dis. Mss. xx. p. 4.

† Dis Mss. xxxvii p 10. ‡ Dis. Mss., Parish of Latheron p. 3.

There were some of the ministers who passed through a similar state of feeling at an earlier stage, their knowledge of the world causing them to anticipate the time of trial. Writing of Dr. Duncan at Ruthwell, Mrs. D. says: "About that time [more than a year before the Disruption] I think the deepest feeling was experienced. . . . He looked on the Church of his childhood's habit and his manhood's choice with profound respect. Convinced that in her principles there was soundness and strength, it overwhelmed him with grief to see her overborne by an interference that he counted unscriptural and illegitimate. So keen was this feeling in him that more than once at the meetings he was obliged to stop. . . . It was remarkable that he never was overcome to that extent in the other villages, but in the Society room at Ruthwell he could not command himself. . . . For forty years he had wedded his affections to his people. That room he had procured for the male and female friendly societies, and there were carried on many of his useful operations. There he had helped them about their ballots for the militia in war time. There, in time of threatened invasion, he had aroused his volunteers. There, in times of scarcity, he had planned with them the bringing of ship-loads of Indian corn and potatoes, and there the stores had been distributed. There he had first unfolded his opening scheme of a savings bank for his own parish. There he had many times examined the village Sabbath school; and there, times uncounted, he had met with them of an evening to worship God. Two evenings in particular, when he was completely overcome, there sat before him those whose spiritual condition he had never been able to influence, and when he looked on them he wept. From the time, however, when the Home Secretary's harsh and ill-considered replies to all the Church's requests proved to him that we had nothing to look for from Government, his natural fortitude was restored to him. He felt that each must take their own place, and stand in their own lot. He warned his people firmly and affectionately, but he never failed again."

Bearing this in mind, we can understand the calmness with which the farewell service was quietly gone through at Ruthwell on the last Sabbath before the Disruption. "The period

seemed perilous ; small things were noted with unusual observance. As we crossed the grounds, rendered so beautiful by his taste and skill, on our way to church, the Sabbath before the Assembly, to our astonishment we found the sun-dial overturned. No part of it was broken but the stile. 'You will never more point your people to the Sun of Righteousness in Ruthwell Church,' remarked one by his side. 'Very likely,' was his quiet reply. Farther on in the lawn we found a flourishing evergreen torn up by the roots, and saw our neighbour's herd of cattle before us, which had broken into the garden. 'Will you say next that old James is not to work again in this garden,' asked another. 'Most likely,' was the answer. We entered the dear old church with solemn thoughts, and heard him preach a sermon on Christ a Priest on His throne, in which he bore his last testimony in that place to the priestly and kingly offices of his Divine Redeemer." *

In certain cases the parting took place after the Assembly, but previous to the Sabbath. "At Woodside, Aberdeen, on Thursday, June 1st, a large assemblage was convened in the church for the purpose of fully discussing the whole question. After addressing the people for nearly two hours, the minister proceeded in conclusion to advert to the prospects of the congregation with reference to their place of worship, and to the arrangements necessary to be made for the succeeding Sabbath, when it was expected that the pulpit would be declared vacant by the Established Presbytery. He urged upon the people the necessity of quiet and becoming conduct on the solemn occasion of leaving their church, entreating them to show to their opponents that *their quarrel was not with men, but with principles, and to exhibit towards those that differed from them the meekness and gentleness of Christ.* He impressed further upon the people the necessity of decision, and that their next Sabbath would be the testing day as to their principles. . . . He concluded by taking a solemn leave of those walls within which they had worshipped so long, trusting that the Lord the Spirit would be with them under a lowlier roof, and prepare them for meeting at last in 'a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'" †

* Dis. Mss. xvi. p. 4. † Dis. Mss. xxvii. p. 5.

Dr. Grierson, of Errol, has given his experience with greater fulness. "There was a very large attendance of the parishioners to meet with me in church on the Sabbath after my return from the Assembly. I had not thought it either expedient or natural to take leave of the place of worship before the Disruption actually occurred, and as there had been no worship in the parish church on the first Sabbath of the Assembly, I was anxious to meet with all my people there once more, although I had signed my demission as a minister of the Establishment, in order that I might under such solemn circumstances preach and press on them the blessed Gospel which many of them would never again hear from my lips, and that I might afterwards lay before them all when thus assembled a full and emphatic statement of the grounds on which I had taken that final step by which I had surrendered so many earthly attachments and advantages. . . . As the meeting was held only for these purposes, the services, though I preached twice, were all confined to that one meeting, at the close of which I took as solemn a leave of that place of worship and of many of the worshippers as I had already done of the Establishment, and intimated that public worship with the adherents of the Free Church would be observed next Lord's Day in the open air, and on the green in front of the Manse. The whole audience was most deeply affected. . . . The burst of feeling was perfectly overwhelming to myself as well as to others. After having with great difficulty of articulation pronounced the benediction, I had to remain in the pulpit nearly a quarter of an hour till every person had left the place except my chief companion in this painful trial, whom I found standing at the end of her accustomed pew in tears, the children having left her. . . . That was to me the most heartrending moment connected with the Disruption, yet the depth of the sympathy and attachment which had been manifested afforded me very precious consolation." *

One more of these parting services deserves notice, as bringing out the testimony of a father of the Church, already referred to in these pages, who held a prominent place in the North—Dr. Ross, of Lochbroom. He was considered, it is said, the best

* Dis. Mss. xi. p. 5.

Gaelic scholar of his day, spoke with fluency five languages, read Hebrew and Greek *ad aperturam*, a man of general culture, whom Sir David Brewster engaged to assist him when publishing the Edinburgh Encyclopedia. "He spent a most useful and honourable life among his people, who still cling to his memory with fond affection. Dr. Ross was one of those who saw, at an early stage of the struggle with the Civil Courts, that the maintenance of a faithful testimony for Christ and the spiritual rights of His people would end in the separation of the Church of Scotland from the State. They are still living to whom he said, five years before the Disruption, that it would take place, and that they would see the road leading to the door of the Established Church of Lochbroom covered with grass, as the church would be deserted by the people, because it would be occupied by such as are described by the prophet Isaiah, lvi. 10. The first Sabbath after the Disruption, Dr. Ross, then in very infirm health, attended the church as a hearer. After sermon by the Rev. Mr. Grant, Dr. Ross rose in his seat, and, with tears running from his eyes, praised the Lord for the testimony to the honour of Christ given by the Disruption party. He then exhorted the people to leave the State Church, which, almost to a man, they then did, and to this day [1867] have never returned."*

The kind of statements, however, made from the pulpit on these occasions will be best understood from one or two examples. "In May, 1840," says Dr. Parker, of Lesmahagow, "I began a series of lectures on the Old Testament. . . . On the Lord's day preceding my departure to attend the Assembly of May, 1843, I was brought in providence to the close of the exposition of Genesis. . . . I preached in the parish church for the last time (May 28), I mentioned that I had intended that day . . . to enter on the exposition of Exodus, but the Lord had provided other work for me, and was calling on me to make a practical Exodus, and depart from the thraldom of Egypt—the Establishment, now thoroughly Erastianised. . . . I took a brief review of God's providential dealings towards our Church in the great controversy in which

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Lochcarron.

she had been engaged. I added that while, by the help of God, desirous to adhere to all the vows and obligations under which I had come at my ordination, . . . and maintaining firmly all the standards and principles of the Church of Scotland, I could no longer continue in connection with an Establishment which had virtually denied the kingly office of Christ, and submitted its spiritual jurisdiction to the control of Cæsar." *

In closing his sermon at Crailing, Mr. Milroy put the question: "Why is our relation disturbed? . . . Why, so happy, so peaceful, so united, do we not remain so? . . . Why shall the simple music of the church-bell not summon us again together into this house of prayer, awakening devout feelings, solemn retrospect, heavenly anticipation? Think not, dear brethren, that I am a stranger to these ties. . . . Mine is not the heart to be insensible to sweet associations and solemn recollections, neither do I disregard the manifold advantages of the position I have held. . . . But there is something dearer to the Christian's heart than outward peace, . . . and that is the honour of his Lord and Redeemer. . . . By events, in hastening which I have had no part, the point has been raised, whether or not we shall continue to retain the civil advantages of our position as an Establishment on grounds which, to say the least, set aside and merge the glory of the Redeemer as King of Zion and sole Head of the Church. . . . I have preferred to resign worldly advantages, rather than retain them on wrong conditions. I am not insensible to the sacrifice, neither are my hopes sanguine as to the future, but the present path of duty only is ours.

"Ever since I came amongst you, . . . I have set myself against that accommodating religion which will go so far with Christ, but will not follow Him wholly. And now I am called myself to set you the example. Interest and feeling stand ranged on one side, principle on another. I choose the latter. I cleave to Christ's supremacy, and I trust to be remembered among you even after my body shall slumber in the dust, as one who honestly urged you to give yourselves wholly to Christ, and who himself set you the example by sacrificing his earthly advantages for Christ's crown and glory. . . . Between me and

* Dis. Mss. xxxi. p. 5.

not a few of this flock I trust the bond will yet subsist. . . . With others I fear the pastoral connection is to cease, because of their mistaken, I question not, conscientious attachment to the walls and notion of an Establishment. Such, in my estimation, prefer the outward shadow to the inward substance, these external circumstances to the grand principles on which the Church of Scotland has been based. These principles we retain. . . . With us, then, is the Church of Scotland; with others are the civil advantages she once enjoyed.

"For yourselves, I entreat you to consider well the part you act. As for me, God forbid that I should cease to pray for you. . . . When I look back, dear brethren, if I feel regret, it is the regret of not holding forth with sufficient fervour the overwhelming love of Jesus, of not being touched enough with the misery of perishing souls. Oh! that I may live henceforth under this twofold impression of the love of Jesus, and the value of immortal souls. Him, having not seen, do I love. He is a blessed Master to serve. This has been my testimony when the candle of prosperity has been shining; it is my testimony now that the cloud of adversity is overhanging. Come, oh, come into the service of this Master. Away with coldness, away with formality, away with deadness. Arise, arise, and return to your God. . . . Come, O Spirit of the living God, and breathe on these slain, that they may live. Amen and amen." *

* Extracted from Mss. furnished by his son, the Rev. A. W. Milroy, M.A. Oxon., Reader at the Rolls, London.

XII. First Service in the Free Church Congregation.

If there was pain in leaving the old churches, the loved scenes of former labour, yet the real point of anxiety was the first meeting of the several Free Church congregations on the succeeding Sabbath. On the numbers who might then rally round the pastor depended his whole prospects of usefulness, and, indeed, of support, through life. In many a manse men looked forward with much misgiving to that memorable Sabbath morning when, all over Scotland, the hitherto united congregations were to be seen breaking up and going in opposite directions. In giving some examples of the scenes which took place, it will be seen how calmly, for the most part, the circumstances are spoken of.

There were parishes in which the results went far beyond what ministers had expected. At Roslin, for three months after the Convocation, Mr. Brown states, the aspect of matters was very dark and discouraging. About the end of that period he tried privately what could be done in the way of collecting money for building a new church, but he found no one willing to do anything. Subsequently, matters were more promising, and, after the Disruption, "the first meeting was held, on the 28th of May, in the old graveyard near Roslin Castle, in the presence of a very large congregation, though the intimation of the meeting there had been made only on the preceding day. He conducted public worship on each of the next eighteen Sabbaths in succession in the same beautiful and romantic situation, with the exception of one Sabbath, which was rather unfavourable." Of 240 communicants, 200 came out, and 40 remained in the Establishment.*

* Dis. Mss. xiv. pp. 1-3.

Dr. Landsborough, of Stevenston, had, as we have seen, declared that very few would follow him, and had received the reply, "There will perhaps be more than you think." Accordingly, he tells the result: "When I returned from the General Assembly, it was arranged that I should preach in the Freemasons' Hall in the forenoon. . . . In going to the hall I met few coming to the Established church, and I saw few going on their way to the hall, so that I knew not how matters were going on. When I reached the hall I found that it was completely filled, and a crowd standing about the door who could not gain admission. The Rev. Gilbert Laing, who unexpectedly arrived, readily consented to officiate in another hall. . . . In the Freemasons' Hall, for the first time as a minister of the Free Protesting Church of Scotland, I preached to a densely crowded and most attentive congregation."*

Sometimes the meeting was held in the minister's house. At Morningside, Dr. Chalmers opened his own dwelling-house, and converted it into a church; and "perhaps he never occupied a more picturesque position than when, planted midway up the staircase, he preached to a disjointed congregation, scattered into different rooms, all of whom could hear, but not half of whom could see, the clergyman."†

At Innerwick, near Dunbar, the first Free Church service was held on 11th June in the manse. The congregation, amounting to about the usual number, filled the rooms and staircase, while the minister, Mr. Forman, stood in the lobby. When, at the close, he intimated that in the course of the week he would remove with his family to the town of Dunbar, and that he was as yet uncertain where a place would be found in which to address them next Lord's Day, there were many of his hearers whose stifled sobs and watery eyes expressively testified the intensity of their feelings.‡

For the most part, however, it was in the open air that the first meetings were held. At Monkton, Mr. Burns and his adhering people retired to a stackyard at the back of the farm of West Orangefield, where for many months in the

* Dis. Mss. xxxix. p. 3. † Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers, iv. 357.

‡ *Witness*, 14th June, 1843.

memorable summer of 1843 they heard the Word with gladness.*

At Moy, Inverness-shire, Dr. M'Lauchlan states: "The first Sabbath after my return from Edinburgh and the Disruption Assembly was the 4th of June. The day was cold and discouraging, the only one of the kind during the summer. The place of meeting was chosen by the people themselves in the Ballintraan Wood, about the middle of the parish. This day was to test the feelings of the people, and I was anxious; but the attendance was good, embracing every man of any consequence in the parish at the time, and several from the parish of Duthil. My text was from Ps. lxxxiii. 4. I was much encouraged to find the people so hearty."†

At Ruthwell, on the second Sabbath of the Assembly, "the Rev Horatius Bonar, of Kelso, preached on the green hillside [on the farm of Mr. Rogerson], to between 2000 and 3000 people [Dr. Duncan had written from Edinburgh, giving directions to have the whins removed]. Vehicles of many descriptions were there from great distances. Solemnity, curiosity, and anxiety occupied the feelings of the crowd. They expected much of Church affairs; but it was too good an opportunity for preaching the everlasting Gospel. . . . The Plant of Renown was his subject; and I have heard some who say that in eternity they will bless the Lord for having heard the Plant described that day."‡

At Ayr, the church of Mr. Grant was one of the *quoad sacra* churches, built chiefly by the Evangelical party; and he says: "We were inclined, if possible, to retain the building. . . . The first Sabbath of August, 1843, was to be my first communion [Mr. Grant had been ordained 23rd April, 1843]. Eight days previously, an interdict from the Court of Session was handed to me, forbidding me the use of the church. This quite took us by surprise. We were not aware that such a step had been proposed. At the instigation of the parish minister of St. Quivox, a few members of the congregation, who had not contributed one sixpence towards the erection of the church, had

* Dis. Mss. xxxiv. p. 3. † Dis. xlix. p. 6.

‡ Dis. Mss. xvi. pp. 5, 6.

been induced to apply for an interdict; and the matter had been pressed on quickly, for the purpose of excluding us from the church on our communion Sabbath. This was done, as we afterwards learned, under the idea that, as my people had never partaken of the Supper with me, they might not consider themselves bound to my ministry; and, if prevented from participating at that time in their own church, might detach themselves from me. It proved a great mistake; for not a few of my people who were at that time irresolute, regarded the interdict as an insult to the congregation, and dishonouring to the Lord's Supper, and at once gave in their adherence to the Free Church.

"The interdict was received at the end of the week—I think, on Saturday. On Sabbath, when the congregation assembled they found the doors locked. The elders directed them to a school-house close beside. When I entered, it was crowded. Among others, I recognised the well-known face of Alexander Murray Dunlop, then on a visit in Ayr. After the first Psalm, we adjourned to the street, and kept our preparation Sabbath in the open air. I well remember the relief I felt when, during prayer, a lady held her parasol to shelter my head from the blazing sun. . . . On the sacramental Sabbath we assembled in Mr. William Alexander's woodyard. The logs were arranged for seats for the congregation, and the pulpit and tables were placed under cover of the sawpit. Rain having come on, some old sails were stretched out as a covering for the people. It was a day much to be remembered. Some of my people still surviving [1875] often speak of it, and especially of the evening sermon by the Rev. P. Borrowman, of Glencairn, on the white stone and the New Name."*

The venerable Dr. Burns, at Kilsyth, on returning from Edinburgh, had preached his farewell sermon in the churchyard, "near the tomb of Mr. Robe, of pious memory, to a very large assembly, from 1 Peter iv. 17, 'If judgment begin at the house of God,' &c. . . . . The day was favourable, the sun shone bright, the scene was truly affecting and impressive." It was on the succeeding Sabbath, 4th June, that the Free Church congregation first met. Public worship was conducted on

* Dis. Mss. xli. pp. 6-8.

"a beautiful sloping bank on the side of the Garrel Burn, . . . near the church now left after twenty-two years' occupation, and within the walls of which scenes ever memorable and sweet and solemn had been witnessed. The morning had threatened rain, but many prayers had been put up for a favourable day. By eleven o'clock the day cleared up. Within the house of Mr. Thomas Shaw the minister's Bible was deposited, and this godly man accompanied him to the tent carrying the Bible under his arm, and as the church-bell sounded to declare a vacancy, the Free Church hearers were thronging to the tent brae, where, for two hours, they heard the Word from their outed minister—the text, 2 Cor. ii. 14. He was carried through the work of the day comfortably, though it is not easy to describe the feelings of himself and family on that occasion." "We trust the Lord was with us in the field, by the stream from the mountain, while there were some falling tears when we thought of the Sabbaths gone by." *

Such scenes as these were taking place in all the country districts of Scotland. Even in the larger towns the first meetings of the Free Church congregations were often held in striking circumstances.

At Woodside, Aberdeen, it was resolved to meet "in the open air, in the spacious playground of the school, which was accordingly seated for the purpose, and was capable of containing upwards of 1500 persons. A small pulpit was placed at one end, and an awning spread above it as a protection from the weather. The morning of Sabbath, 4th June, was cold and ungenial. Dark clouds overspread the sky, and a cold wind blew from the north. Long before the hour of worship the people began to assemble in the playground, and by eleven o'clock it was densely filled by more than 1500 persons, many having come from a distance to witness so novel a spectacle. The minister commenced by singing the first four verses of Psalm xx., and after prayer, preached from Acts xxiv. 14-16, 'But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers,' &c. The service closed with the baptism of two children. The whole proceedings were con-

* Dis. Mss. xxix. pp. 9, 31.

ducted in the most orderly manner. A spirit of deep solemnity pervaded the assembly." *

Mr. M'Bean, minister of the Gaelic congregation at Greenock, attempted at first to keep possession of his *quoad sacra* church, but the Established Presbytery were prompt in their action. On Saturday, 24th June, he was at their instance interdicted from entering his pulpit. "This was the crisis in the history of the Gaelic congregation, . . . a time of great anxiety. . . . The office-bearers, in the emergency, agreed to ask the magistrates for the use of the Duncan Street burying-ground, the right of management being in the corporation. Their application was at once granted, and the people assembled there the following day at eleven. This Sabbath, June 25th, will be ever memorable in the history of the Free Gaelic congregation. The burying-ground presented a scene that day which can never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. It was a bright, warm, sunny day, so that the people experienced little inconvenience by worshipping in the open air. Let us hope it was also a day in which the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing on His wings to many. A tent was erected near the centre of the ground, from which Mr. M'Bean preached in the forenoon in Gaelic, from Hebrews xi. 25, 'Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God,' &c.; and it afforded him unfeigned satisfaction to see that the people had all adhered to the Free Church, with only one or two exceptions. In the afternoon many from other congregations joined in the services, being drawn together partly from sympathy with the outed minister and his people, and partly, no doubt, from the novelty of the scene, so far at least as Greenock was concerned. His text on this occasion was Hebrews x. 34, 'For ye had compassion on me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods,' &c., from which he preached an eloquent and powerful discourse; and in the evening the Rev. John Glass, of Bracadale, afterwards of Musselburgh, preached from Hebrews ii. 3, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation,' with his characteristic earnestness and zeal, to a large and attentive assemblage." †

* Dis. Mss. xxvii. p. 5. † Parker Mss., Pres. of Greenock.

So far as the town congregations, however, were concerned, open-air services were the exception. A much more frequent case was such as that of St. Andrew's congregation, Glasgow, so well described by Dr. Paterson. On returning from the Assembly, he states that he found "the elders in a pother, totally unprovided with a place for the remnant to meet in next Sabbath, and it was then Friday evening . . . Instead of going to my sermons (I had counted on only one, but a scheme of exchange had failed), I must set out in quest of the elders, to see what must be done in such an emergency. I had only gone a little way when I met an angel with a smiling face —Meekie, who, with her brother, was hieing to our house. She is my jewel, I should rather say God's, and the world will never go ill with me as long as she is in it. She had that day more joy than a kingdom could have given her. One of her nearest friends had become serious. After a brief welcome, she told me a place was procured, and an advertisement sent to two newspapers, placards ready, and circulars, which were to be sent to some hundreds of the congregation. It was justly said by one of the best of our session, that Miss M. was better than six elders. I immediately turned with the party to see the place. It was the very room where the same congregation gave me a public dinner on my installation in Glasgow. . . . This room of the Black Bull Inn had been obtained at the request of Miss M. The landlady is decidedly with us; her husband wavering; the family belong to my flock. Mercy is twice blessed. The hostess consented with tears, saying that my angel had been sent by God, for they had been in doubt whether to remain with the walls, and this had come just to confirm them. On Sabbath morning, instead of the vestry, I was accoutred in the parlour of a public-house. I could not help asking an elder who was present, whether anybody had come. He said, with a grave countenance, there were some. My text was, 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.' This subject for both diets was suggested by Meekie on her seeing a millenarian placard to that effect on the posts of the doors within which we were to assemble. My use of the text, no doubt differing from that of the millenarian, was, *Go out*, for the Bridegroom

will not *come in.* When the bells had rung their last peal, the grave elder returned with a bright face, and said the hall was choke full, and that one of the audience had just been to St. Andrew's for his books, where Mr. Smith, of Cathcart, a sympathiser, was to preach, and where, at five minutes to eleven o'clock, only three persons had assembled. This was something like going out ; my heart rose like a balloon, and I never went to a pulpit with more comfort, or preached with more freedom. They say that listeners never hear good of themselves, and it is as probable that spies see as little. In our hall, a boy was heard counting away at heads behind backs, and the vile work came afterwards to be explained. The boy is a boarder with Mr. Allan, a teacher, a probationer, a rampant Moderate, and an elder of St. Andrew's walls. The boy knows my boys, and told them he was sent by his master to count both congregations. His report was : in the hall, 456—alas, it could hold no more ; in the church, 35—alas, it could hold 1200. . . . And now, having done with this wonderful day, I am grateful to add, that never had I more content or a frame of spirit more disposed to praise the Lord for His goodness. I shall have less money, but many retrenchments will now be honourable, and I have no fear of suffering want."* [It may be added, Dr. Forbes, of St. Paul's, in a letter of date 10th August, 1874, not long before his death, characterises the above statement as an admirable account of the proceedings of the first Sabbath, and adds, that it may be taken as a lively account of the general proceedings of that day in Glasgow.]

At Errol, Dr. Grierson's expectations of the numbers who should adhere to the Free Church were not great. The place of meeting was the green in front of the manse. "When the day came (June 4th), the appearances at first were very unpromising. I had shut myself up in my study," he says, "that I might not have my thoughts distracted or my feelings agitated by what was passing without. I learned, however, that even when the time appointed for our public worship was almost come, an earlier hour than usual having been found necessary, no hearers had come to occupy the seats placed for them on the green

* Mr. Nath. Paterson's Letters, with Memoir, pp. 149, 150.

except two widows in humble life, each of whom as she passed the collection plate, dropped into it her consecrated mite. But shortly afterwards, the people began to assemble in considerable numbers, when it appeared that they had lingered in the neighbourhood, and had not taken their places till almost the last moment, as if they had felt that their assembling in such a spot before the worship was about to begin was somewhat like invading the privacy of domestic life.

"The place of meeting was extremely picturesque and retired. It was immediately in front of the manse, in the form of an oval, and entirely enclosed by tall shrubs, chiefly laurels, interspersed with lilacs and laburnums—the former lifting their fragrant and massy tufts, and the latter hanging forth their golden and waving tassels over the others. The scenery of the immediate neighbourhood was all shut out, except the tower and pinnacles of that church which we had so lately left. The pulpit, which had been brought down the evening before on the willing shoulders of some dozen of the young men, was placed with its back to the east, so that the occupant might be sheltered from the wind blowing from that quarter, and was flanked by a tall and taper young yew-tree, whose solemn verdure harmonised well with the nature of the services which were to be celebrated so near it.

"The pulpit itself was that which had belonged to the church that was taken down after the present one had been erected. It had been presented to me by the heritors as the one from which I had been addressed on the day of my ordination, and from which I had preached for nearly the first fourteen years of my ministry; and, as was noticed at the time, the person who by appointment that day occupied the pulpit I had left was the very individual who had presided when the Presbytery ordained me. A few of my parishioners, not quite two years before, though not in anticipation of the events which had now occurred, had presented me with a handsome family Bible and Psalm-book; and when these were carried before me, and placed in the pulpit by my youngest child, a boy of seven years of age, who had requested permission to perform this service, many in the meeting, as I was afterwards informed, were sen-

sibly affected. When I walked through the rows of the people, some seated on forms, some on the grass, and many of them standing, and took my seat in my old pulpit, I was at first much overpowered; but during the singing of the psalm, which in ordinary course happened to be the 65th, I regained my composure, which was not again disturbed, although in the course of the first prayer the bell of the parish church, which had then ceased to be under my control, kept ringing for the whole of the usual time.

"My text was Hebrews xi. 24-27, which occupied me the whole day. The people were extremely attentive, and when I came to the application of the subject in the afternoon, having by this time obtained a lithographed copy of the Deed of Demission, with the signatures of all the 470 ministers, I threw it open over the side of the pulpit, as a recent and practical illustration of the noble principles embodied in the text, which seemed to produce a very powerful impression. It was calculated that between six and seven hundred persons were present. Some of them, as I was fully aware, had been attracted merely by the novelty of the occasion, or some such motive, and without any intention of adhering to our solemn Protest; while others who really intended to do so would, as it was to be feared, and ultimately proved to be the case, be intimidated, importuned, or enticed to withdraw from us. The first time that I had any leisure to attend particularly to the numbers that were present was at the dismissal after the forenoon service. Being called up to the staircase window, I saw the road from the manse to the village, a distance of fully two hundred yards, covered with people for nearly its whole extent as closely as they could walk. They were generally of the humbler classes; but their liberal collection — about eight times the amount of the average before we left the Establishment — showed that their hearts were with us. At this sight I burst into tears, thanked God, and took courage." *

Dr. Simpson, of Kintore, had looked forward to the Disruption with painful emotions on many grounds. "Though I never failed," he says, "to record my vote in the Church

* Dis. Mss. xi. pp. 5-7.

Courts, and to keep the subject in the view of my people, yet the controversy became to me extremely unpleasant; and, strange as it may seem, I sought refuge from it in a course of study altogether unconnected with its immediate bearing. . . . I was all the while, however, . . . determined to stand or fall by the principles I had conscientiously espoused, leaving events to God.

"I was perfectly aware that a considerable number of my people favoured the cause to which I adhered; but I did not expect that more than a small section of them would take the decisive step of seceding from the Established Church along with me. I had even some doubts whether it would be practicable or expedient to form a Free Church congregation in Kintore. But these unworthy misgivings were speedily dissipated. The event showed that I did my people great injustice in the opinion I had formed of them. I shall never forget the feelings I experienced on first entering the Farmers' Hall, in which we held our meetings for public worship till the new church was erected. Mrs. Simpson had been taken ill that Sabbath morning, and I felt very much the want of her cheering support in the trying duties of the day. I therefore left the manse with inexpressible sadness of heart. Such was my extreme depression of spirits that I fancied I derived strength and encouragement from the presence even of my two eldest children [both under ten years of age], whose little hands I grasped with eagerness as I walked along. But, oh, how my almost fainting heart was revived and sustained when I surveyed the interesting assembly, and saw so many of those of my former flock, whom I loved most dearly, seated around my humble pulpit, and bending on me intent looks of the tenderest attachment and kindest sympathy. The only tears I shed in connection with the Disruption burst from my eyes at this moment, and they were not tears of grief, but of lively gratitude and joy."*

Even in localities where the Free Church proved to be exceptionally strong, that Sabbath morning was a time of anxiety and misgiving, as may be seen from the experience of Mr. Craig of Rothesay :—

* Dis. Mss., Dr. Simpson, Kintore, pp. 2, 3.

"The parish manse of Rothesay stands on the slope of a hill by the side of the road, called the Minister's Brae. . . . It looks across the valley in which the town is situated. . . . From the upper windows a fine view is obtained of the entire town and bay, . . . the entrance to the Kyles of Bute, and their varied and attractive scenery. It is surrounded by trees, all of which were planted by Mr. Craig, among which he had often walked with delight, pruning-knife in hand, and enjoying instructive, playful, and exhilarating conversation with a friend. Each of them might almost be looked on as an old acquaintance. . . .

"The parish church is situated about a mile out of town, at the lower end of Loch Fad. . . . The road that conducts to it from the town resembles an avenue, a row of elegant trees lining it all the way. Arrangements had been made for conducting worship, on the first Sabbath after Mr. Craig's return, in the Gaelic Church. Its accommodation was small, but it was not known to what extent the congregation might assemble round their minister on this occasion. It *was* known that at least a few decided and faithful witnesses would be found, true to their principles and true to their friend. Sabbath, 4th June, was a calm and lovely day. The sun shone bright and clear. The air was balmy and pure. Scarcely a breath of wind was felt, or the slightest rustling of the foliage observable. The bay was still and peaceful as a lake. . . .

"As he was wont, Mr. Craig left the manse about half-an-hour before the time of beginning public worship. It is scarcely possible for any one who has not passed through a similar experience and mental state to enter into the feelings of a minister's heart on such an occasion as this. He has left for God's and conscience' sake the place wherein he has proclaimed for years the grand doctrines of salvation to a large and affectionate congregation. He has cast himself on the care of a gracious and loving Providence, not knowing what shall befall him. Principles are at stake, a testimony for which is to be lifted up, and in the defence of which, for the Lord's sake and their own, he *would* be joined, if possible, by those whose happiness is dear to him as his own soul. The hour of trial is

come. He may have his misgivings. Who are the faithful ones? How many will be on the Lord's side? Like Eli of old, trembling for the ark, his heart trembles for the honour of his Lord. If *that* be evidently safe, all selfish considerations entirely laid aside, he is happy and glad. Some such emotion as this may have passed through his mind on the present occasion.

"For many years past, a long continuous stream of men and women and children was to be seen each Sabbath morning wending their way solemnly and thoughtfully along the road, literally as in the case of Israel, '*going up* to give thanks unto the Lord.' The minister walks down the avenue from the manse, and goes out upon the highway. Not a creature is to be seen. A single remark is made to his friend accompanying him, and then he is silent. Passing onward, he reaches the High Street, and changing his usual route—formerly to the left—he turns down to the right. A solemn silence reigns. Not a human being has yet been seen. Into what channel has the usual stream been directed? 'There are to be few in church to-day—the next corner will disclose something surely,' and again all is silence. Not a word is spoken. The mental excitement is intense. Curiosity is fully awakened. Hope has been wound up to the highest pitch. The given spot is reached, and *the* discovery is now to be made. He turns off to the left, and at right angles to the High Street. Now a cheering sight greets the eye and fills the heart with devoutest gratitude to God. A dense multitude crowds round the door of the Gaelic Church, vainly expecting admittance to what was already a packed house. The lobbies, the passages, the pulpit stairs, all are filled. Every inch of standing room is occupied. His former beadle, John Macdonald, is waiting to attend him *as usual.* The greater number of his attached elders surround him *as usual.* His congregation, too, is there *much as usual.* With great difficulty, from the density of the crowd, the pulpit is reached. After praise, prayer, and the reading of the Word, in all which exercises his own spirit was deeply moved, he discoursed with remarkable unction and power to the joy and edification of his people, from Psalm cxxvi. 3: 'The Lord hath

done great things for us, whereof we are glad.' This was indeed a day never to be forgotten. There was not a little of the Spirit's presence and the Spirit's power, and thus began his ministry in the Free Church of Scotland." *

In connection with the services of that day, there occurred in one of the northern parishes a remarkable interposition of Providence, which must have made a deep impression on the surrounding population.

"At Rosehall, Sutherlandshire, the Established Church fell in on the first Sabbath after it had been vacated by the congregation. The whole area and pulpit were covered with slates, stones, and rubbish, which must have occasioned much loss of life if the congregation had been assembled, the church having fallen during the hours of the usual Sabbath service." †

It was one of those incidents which might not unnaturally have been viewed as ominous of evil, and interpreted by some to the disadvantage of the Established Church. But apart from all such views, the people had great reason for thankfulness to God on account of that providential care which had permitted them to worship in safety in their parish church up to the time when, under a sense of duty, they had been compelled to assemble elsewhere. Such an event in the history of the parish could not fail to leave a deep impression behind it.

* Memorials of the Rev. R. Craig, pp. 216-220.
† Parker Mss., Pres. of Dornoch.

XIII. The Preaching of Churches Vacant.

After the removal of a minister by death or otherwise, the custom in Scotland is, that a member of Presbytery is sent on an early Sabbath to preach the church vacant, as it is termed—that is, to read at the close of the usual service a formal document announcing the vacancy. At the Disruption there was, of course, much of this kind of work to be done, and, not unfrequently, it was carried out under somewhat remarkable circumstances.

The difficulty in some cases was to get together an audience sufficient to witness the ceremony. At Langton, in Berwickshire, when Dr. Brown left, the member of Presbytery who came to preach, found it impossible to get a single parishioner to listen to him, and it was believed that he had to return without holding any service, or even reading the intimation at the church. What made the matter more noticeable was the circumstance, that a proclamation of banns had to be made that day, and the session-clerk found that no witnesses could be got to go near the church till the people had made sure that the representative of the Presbytery had fairly left the village, and was well on his way home.

At Bolton, in East-Lothian, when the day came, Mr. Abernethy was on his deathbed. The Presbytery had selected for the work one who formerly had professed non-intrusion principles. He "put the horse into the stable, and went to the minister's room to announce his mission. He then proceeded to the church, but the bell-man and precentor were absent, and not one individual appeared. In this extremity, he invited the hinds of a neighbouring farmer to be witnesses that the church was declared vacant, but they refused to come. He then insti-

tuted a search in the village, and at length lighted upon two old men, whom he invited to 'come this way,' who did not know what his purpose was. Taking his stand in front of the church, the rev. gentleman prayed, and before proceeding to read his document, said, 'Stop, I see a dressed man coming, perhaps he intends to hear sermon.' The dressed man, however, passed on, and the rev. gentleman read his paper. . . . In this case the parishioners have anticipated the Presbytery by saving them the trouble of declaring the church vacant." *

Throughout the North of Scotland there was much reluctance to engage in this work. It is believed, indeed, that in some cases it was never done, and in others, it was only after long delay. In the island of Lewis, it was the 3rd of September before a beginning was made by preaching vacant the church of Lochs. The minister of Stornoway, who was sent to officiate, had first himself to perform the office of beadle, and then conduct the service in presence of his own domestics—the ground officer of Stornoway and his manservant, the entire audience having been brought from a distance.†

At Sheildaig, the whole attendance consisted of three, only one of whom was a parishioner.‡

At Poolewe, the delegate of the Presbytery officiated to an audience of one—"his own gillie." §

At Killearnan, in Ross-shire, the attendance was more extensive, consisting of thirteen strangers and nine parishioners, five of whom belonged to one family. When the minister of Avoch arrived to do duty, it was found that there was no bell-rope, but a beam was procured, and with it the minister's man was "forked up" till his hand reached the residue of the rope, when the bell was rung, and the service went on.**

At Skirling,†† near Biggar, intimation had courteously been sent that service would be held at four o'clock, on Sabbath, 2nd July. In this way, "any of the parishioners who were at all anxious to be present had ample opportunity, as the Free Church service was over by two. Shortly after four o'clock the

* *Witness*, 21st June, 1843.
† *Ibid.* 20th September, 1843.
‡ *Ibid.* 26th August.
§ *Ibid.*
** *Ibid.* 19th July.
†† *Ibid.* 5th July, 1843.

Presbyterial delegate drove into the village, attended by his man, and from the turn out of the villagers at their doors, there was, no doubt, good reason to expect a well-filled church. The rev. gentleman alighted and took a turn back and forward on the green, expecting every moment to hear the bell summon the villagers to church; but the bell maintained an obstinate silence, and the people doggedly kept their places at their doors, and as he was unable to account for this anomalous conduct, he had recourse to the schoolmaster. 'Where's the beadle?' was at once asked. 'Oh! there's no beadle,' was the reply. 'Where's the precentor, then?' 'Oh! there's no precentor neither.' This was certainly very embarrassing; but the happy thought immediately struck the rev. gentleman that a precentor might be got among the congregation after they were met, and his own man might perform the important functions of beadle for a day. So Sandy got the Bible and the keys, and repaired to the church to open the pews and ring the bell, and the minister followed. Soon after he entered, the bell was seen by the watchful villagers to commence swinging with great vehemence. 'Come and see how the bell's gawin,' was the general cry; but the bell had just uttered five tolls, when, as if questioning Sandy's right to handle her so roughly, she suddenly and simultaneously became mute and motionless, without assigning reasons. Several vigorous jerks were then observed, but they made no impression on the bell; there it stood, and there it still remains perched on the top of the vestry, with its mouth turned upwards, and there it may remain till the residuary Presbytery appoint a committee to deal with it, *if haply it may be brought round.* What passed within the church is known to no human being but the minister and Sandy. The service, if any, could not have been very long, for, after about seven minutes, they were both seen to issue from the church in great haste. Sandy did not appear to relish the duties he had so lately undertaken, for, declaring he 'didna like the job ava,' he left the Bible to be lifted and the doors to be locked by any individual who chose to install himself into the office. 'We take you to witness,' said the minister to some of the parishioners as he passed, 'that we rung the bell and preached the church vacant.' 'We a'

witnessed the ringing o' the bell,' was the reply, 'but what was done in the kirk nane but your twa sel's can tell.'"

Sometimes untoward incidents occurred, and attracted notice. At Watten, Caithness, "the congregation adhered to the Free Church, and cheerfully followed their minister to worship in the fields; only two or three persons remained behind. . . . The minister who was appointed to intimate the vacancy was afraid he might not have the fragment of a flock to be hearers and witnesses on the occasion. A man was despatched on horseback to summon a few individuals, and urge them to be present in Watten Church on the Sabbath. This man's horse, on his homeward ride, fell; and, in consequence of the fall, died. A cartful of people were gathered in obedience to the above summons, and were proceeding to the church, but the horse also stumbled and fell, and did not long survive." *

Hugh Miller was in the North when the vacancy was declared at Resolis, and writes, 18th July:—"Mr. Sage was preached out on Sunday last, and, by dint of superhuman exertion among all the lairds, a congregation of thirty were brought together to see that he was; . . . and of the thirty, two whole individuals, a man and his wife, were stated hearers in the parish church. There could be found no one to ring the bell, and no one to be precentor, though twenty shillings were offered as remuneration; and a man and gig had to be sent rattling to Cromarty an hour ere service began, to procure both out of M'Kenzie's congregation. The story goes, that with the first tug the bellman gave, a swarm of angry bees came down about his ears with wrathful fizz, and that, to avoid their stings, he had to quit his hold and show them a clean pair of heels. The Moderates are in a perilous state, when every untoward incident that occurs is regarded as an omen, and interpreted to their disadvantage." †

It is not to be supposed that in all cases it was their adherence to the Free Church which led the people to absent themselves on these occasions. Even those who meant to adhere to the Establishment had in some instances so much of personal respect and regard for the outed minister, that they felt little inclination to witness the final act by which the last tie was

* Parker Mss., Rev. A. Gunn. † Life, vol. ii. 375.

formally severed. At the same time there can be no doubt that the specimens which we have given from widely separated districts of Scotland, represent truly the feelings which to a large extent pervaded the country, more especially in the North. For years the Moderate party, while refusing to abate their policy, had been calling aloud for peace; and in many a parish, while declaring the vacancy, it might well have seemed as if they had got their wish in the old Roman fashion—*Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*

XIV. The Licensed Preachers.

One fact of great importance was the adherence to the cause of a numerous body of students and probationers. Already, in 1840, a memorial had been presented to the General Assembly by 107 students of divinity, intimating their resolution to maintain the principles for which the Church was contending. When the Convocation of November, 1842, drew near, a still more decided step was taken by a large body of probationers. It was well known that if the threatened Disruption took place, many parishes throughout Scotland would be left vacant, and the licensed preachers of the Church might well have looked forward to obtaining positions not only of comfort, but of influence. Unaffected by such considerations, a numerous band of young men resolved to cast in their lot with the outgoing ministers.

The Rev. W. Grant, soon afterwards settled at Ayr, narrates the rise of this movement. "The origin of the movement was as follows:—The Convocation of ministers having been summoned, I was strongly impressed by the conviction that the probationers who sympathised with the Evangelical party should be invited to meet to consider the propriety of issuing a public and united declaration of their approval of the principles contended for, and of their determination to adhere to those who maintained them.

"Being at that time assistant to Rev. Dr. Thomas Brown, of St. John's, Glasgow, I had occasion to walk home from church (I think after sermon on the Monday after the communion) with the Rev. Dr. Patrick M'Farlan, of Greenock. I availed myself of the opportunity to ask his opinion of my idea. I well remember the warm manner in which he gave it his

hearty approval, encouraging me to proceed. His son, then his assistant, has often afterwards assured me, that nothing had more encouraged his father to face the difficulties of those days than the helpful and hearty spirit with which so large a body of probationers entered into this movement.

"Encouraged by Dr. M'Farlan's kind words, I wrote to my dear friend, John M'Farlan, to come and consult with me in regard to the matter. . . . Having met and formed our plan of procedure, we invited the only probationers we knew of in the neighbourhood who sympathised with us to join in calling a meeting of probationers to be held in Glasgow. These were Eric Findlater, now Free Church minister at Lochearnhead, Andrew Cunningham, now Free Church minister at Eccles, and Rev. James Porteous, now minister of Free Church at Ballantrae. . . . It is important to observe that this was the origin of the movement of the probationers, inasmuch as it shows that this movement was their spontaneous act. It was not at the call nor by the suggestion of ministers that it was begun; and, as Dr. Chalmers' letter . . . in the minute-book proves, the movement was persisted in although cold water was thrown on it by some of the ministers of the Evangelical party, and much dissuasion and cajolery was employed by many ministers who then belonged to that party, but who at last stayed in. Though Mr. M'Farlan and I only knew of three probationers already named as sympathising with our views, yet by consultation with them, and with others whom they knew, our list speedily began to increase. Responding to our first circular, 28 probationers assembled in Glasgow to our first general meeting, and 19, who could not attend, sent in letters approving of the proposal to call a convocation of probationers. At the convocation of probationers in Edinburgh on 14th December, 1842, our numbers had increased to between 70 and 80. And 192 gave in their names to the first General Assembly of the Free Church. . . .

"I remember that we then estimated that there were about 500 probationers who held licenses in the Established Church. Many of these had become teachers or farmers, or were employed in other secular callings. Besides, our difficulty was to

ascertain who were likely to sympathise with us. I think we must have corresponded with considerably above 200 probationers.

"I wish I could have gone over the names, . . . marking their subsequent history or steadfastness. This I have not leisure to attempt, but many of their names are now well known as holding, or as having held, prominent places in the Free Church. Some have fallen away from their profession, but most of them have laboured faithfully amid the quiet of their own congregations. I can unhesitatingly say that, with one exception, I never heard any of them express regret for the step they then took." *

The meeting of Convocation on the evening of 23rd November, at which the preachers were received, was one of the most interesting diets of that Assembly. Complete unanimity had just been reached in regard to the terms of the address to be sent to Government along with the resolutions. Men were rejoicing in the fact that the last trace of diversity of opinion had disappeared, when the probationers were introduced. They were represented by a deputation consisting of Mr. Grant, Mr. John M'Farlan (now of Greenock), Mr. Islay Burns (afterwards Professor), Mr. Patrick Muirhead (now of Kippen), Mr William Makellar (afterwards of Pencaitland), and others. After a short address from Mr. Grant, stating the substance of the memorial which they had come to present, Mr. M'Cheyne offered up the prayer which made so deep an impression on the House. In name of the Convocation, Dr. M'Farlan, of Greenock, gave a warm welcome to the preachers. Dr. Cunningham also spoke, and congratulated them on the honest and manly course which they had taken, and assured them that no effort would be spared in order to provide opportunities of usefulness. He referred with much interest to the fact that Dr. M'Farlan, who had himself done so much, and was ready to sacrifice so much for the principles of the Church, had now a son standing in the front rank of the rising generation.

During the following month (14th December) a general meeting of the preachers was held in Edinburgh, and passed

* Narrative by Rev. W. Grant, of Ayr, Dis. Mss.

still more decided resolutions. How cordially the movement was welcomed may be seen from a communication written by Dr. Candlish, in name of the committee of Convocation, and addressed on their behalf to the meeting of probationers. "We heartily welcome the accession to our number of so many ardent and youthful spirits ready to make common cause and cast in their lot with us in this time of trial; and as we have already taken encouragement from the reflection that, among the adherents to the resolutions which have been adopted, we may reckon so large a proportion of aged and venerable servants of Christ, whose lengthened ministry has been that of men willing to spend and be spent for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, and who now, drawing near the close of life, have not hesitated to put their earthly all in peril for the great love they bear to His kingly throne and His free Church; so, on the other hand, we cannot but be cheered by the prospect of so goodly a company of the youth of our Zion—worthy, as we trust, to be the children of these men of God in spirit, as some of you are in the flesh—coming forward in the fresh prime and enthusiasm of opening manhood to take up in active service the testimony to which these fathers have consecrated the prayers and patience of their declining years. . . .

"We are well aware of the sacrifices which many of you may be called to make of worldly prospects of advancement which hitherto you have been warranted in cherishing, and remembering well our own sentiments and feelings when we were in your position, and being fully aware of the exaggerated value which hope is ever apt to set on untried good, we can well imagine that it may be in some respects more difficult and painful for you to forego those rewards of honourable ambition which the influential position of an Establishment holds out, than for us to relinquish them after having proved what is in them. In all these elements which must mingle with your deliberations, we assure you of our earnest sympathy; and we cannot but regard it as a noble and generous spectacle, fitted to tell on an age incredulous of the reality of great principle, if a considerable body of the pious and devoted candidates for the ministry among us, who otherwise might have commanded the highest

prizes of their profession, and might have found, perhaps, some plausible plea to justify their silence at least, if not their submission, shall be found fearlessly speaking out on the side of truth and integrity—willing to go forth unto Christ without the camp, bearing His reproach."*

When the Assembly came, it was found that 192 probationers gave in their names as having resolved to take part in the Church's trials and toils; and it soon appeared that the devoted band were all too few for the many fields of usefulness which the adherence of the people opened up in all districts of the country.

* *Witness* Newspaper, 28th December, 1842.

XV. Leaving the Manse.

It is remarkable that so many of the ministers have said nothing as to the actual removal. Only they who have known the quiet happiness of these manses can tell what sadness there was in parting from the old home, and the pain of recalling that time of trial may have been one reason why the circumstances have been passed over in so many of the narratives. In other cases, however, such feelings have evidently been lost in the far higher thoughts which filled the mind. "Is it not difficult to give up all this?" the writer asked Mr. Mellis, of Tealing, as we were walking round his garden, three weeks before the Disruption. The spring flowers were bursting into beauty, the manse and its surroundings were bright in the morning sun. "No," he replied; "I am thankful to feel that I have something to give up for Christ."

In the same frame of mind, Dr. Duncan, of Ruthwell, "took joyfully" the actual leaving of his manse. "On the previous evening his eldest son and two little grandsons had arrived to look again at the birthplace of one and a scene which he wished the other two to remember if they should live to be old. On the next day we had agreed to meet and eat our last mid-day meal in the dear old parlour, which for forty-three years had witnessed much hospitality and kindness. But Dr. Duncan and his son had gone to look after the workmen at the rising church. Noon, one, two, three o'clock passed. We were in despair it would be night. The people who were working suggested the idea that he could not bear to take leave of the house, and did not mean to return. We dined without them, and the last chair was placed on the cart, when, cheerful and hungry, they returned to the door of the dismantled dwelling. A message

from a sick man had drawn them to a distance of eight miles, and, little occupied about where or how he should be lodged, he had pursued his ministerial work as if no removal had been in the way. Yet he was bent on making the best of our discomforts. Next morning, when he found rain pouring into our new pantry, he returned quietly to the home of his early happiness to bring a bit of lead, which he had observed in the rubbish of the garret, that with it he might stop the hole that was adding to our discomfort. We smiled at the incident, as proving how far they were mistaken who thought he indulged in anything like sentimental sorrow for what he had resigned." * [Dr. Duncan was at that time nearly seventy years of age.]

On the part of many besides Dr. Duncan there is little disposition to make much of these trials. Mr. Thomson, of Muckhart, dismisses them as briefly as possible. His "experience in connection with the change has not been one of special trial. The last sermon to my old flock, the roup, and the flitting, no doubt, were trying enough, but these were trials common to nearly all." † So, also, at Walls, in Shetland, Mr. Elder quietly remarks: "The circumstance of leaving a comfortable manse, and coming to a cold, damp house, was a little trial to myself and family," ‡ and then he goes on to speak of his mercies.

Others, who were not less willing for the sacrifice, yet seem to have felt more keenly the breaking of the local tie. "After the business of the Assembly was over," says Dr. M'Lauchlan, "and the deed of demission signed, I returned home, and perhaps the greatest pain I suffered connected with the Disruption was as I walked down from the coach to the manse, and realised that the tie between me and this place, where I was born and bred, and which I had latterly done much to beautify, was now for ever at an end. The pain was but momentary, but it was severe, for I have by nature a strong attachment to places." §

"I write at the distance of six years from the Disruption," says Mr. Taylor, of Flisk, "and every time I look back I am

* Dis. Mss. xvi. pp. 8, 9.
† *Ibid.* xxviii. p. 8.
‡ *Ibid.* xviii. p. 1.
§ *Ibid.* xlix. p. 9.

filled with thankfulness to God for the part He led me to act at that trying time. No regrets or longings even for the temporalities have ever disquieted my mind. The only time I felt somewhat overcome was in the evening of leaving the manse, when, having sent every person and thing away, I remained behind, and the empty house resounded to the departing tread, and I turned the key on the outer door, and my back upon the house and church, in which I had hoped to have spent years of usefulness and happiness, and as the shadows of evening were falling thickly and gloomily, so also did the uncertainties of the future. But these were passing feelings. They soon gave place to brighter feelings when I considered the blessed results which God speedily brought out of the Disruption to this neighbourhood."*

Family ties, as might have been expected, often gave additional sadness to the act of parting. Of Mr. Martin, Bathgate, it is said: "After the Assembly of 1843, he returned to the manse, in which nearly twenty of the most eventful years of his life had been spent, and began to prepare for leaving it. How little the mere spectators of these manse-quittings could understand the wounds thereby made on some of the strongest and most homely affections of our nature. There was the study, where his soul had been ripening both in heavenly and earthly knowledge, and there he had borne his people so often on his heart before God ('If you knew what prayers were offered up for you in the study,' said a domestic to one of his people, 'how you would prize the minister'); the garden, where, year after year, he had watched the growth of trees planted by his own hand, and tended the large white daisies which he had brought from the manse garden of Kirkcaldy (years after, when passing with him one bright moonlight night, he said, 'Well, you may smile, but I felt it hard in 1843 to leave these trees'); and the home into which he had brought the beloved wife of his youth, and which had become the home of his children. . . . The procession from the manse was touching enough. The elder children and furniture had been sent on before; Mrs. Martin followed, with her fifth boy, William, in her arms; and her husband walked

* Dis. Mss. xxxvii. p. 12.

beside her with the large family Bible under his arm. 'We hoped that we would not meet any one,' said Mrs. Martin, afterwards, 'as we could not have spoken.' They moved along in silence to the small upper flat which they had rented, and which was the only dwelling they could then obtain. The prayer that night at the household altar told of a soul at liberty, and satisfied with God for a portion." *

Mr. Findlater, of Durness, writes, on 20th July, 1843: "I could not possibly leave the manse till a fortnight ago, waiting an opportunity of conveying my furniture and part of my family by sea, from near the shores of Cape Wrath to Thurso, and my wife and the younger branches of my family by land, being a distance of at least 70 miles. Not a house or hut could be got nearer for their accommodation. I have taken a room in the only inn in the district, where I at present sojourn. . . . My feelings, and those of my family, on leaving the manse, after a residence of thirty-one years, I cannot describe. Though painful in some respects, yet I trust it was a willing sacrifice. . . . Jehovah-Jireh is a strong tower. . . . My wife was born in the manse she lately left empty, left two of our children's dust behind, and accompanied by six, all hitherto unprovided for, to sojourn among strangers, has displayed a moral heroism which is soothing to my feelings." †

The flitting at Kilsyth is very simply noticed: "June 14th.—Returned home [from the settlement of his son, Dr. Islay Burns, at Dundee]. Found the manse vacated, as expected—the removal having been completed on the evening preceding. On passing from the canal boat, went into the manse—not quite sure how matters were. Found emptiness. Mrs. Rankin, of Boynbie, and Mrs. Kennedy, both friendly, were there, who were much moved at the unusual meeting. The family were comfortably located in our hired house, Charles Street—all well after the fatigues of flitting. . . . Twenty-three years in the manse left; in manse of Dun, eighteen years. Psalm cxix. 9: 'I am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me.' . . . *Slept sound in the new lodgings.*" ‡

* Memoirs, p. 117. † *Witness* Newspaper, 25th October, 1843.
‡ Dis. Mss. xxix. p. 11.

Mr. Duncan, of Cleish, states: "I left the Manse of Cleish on the Monday immediately succeeding the General Assembly, and after all my family had been despatched to the apartments prepared for them at Kinross, three miles off, and the last cart was nearly loaded with the remaining furniture, I entered my dismantled study for the last time, and on looking around me, with feelings which I shall not attempt to describe, I saw one of the little printed tickets which I was in the habit of using in the Sabbath School lying on the mantelpiece. Impressed with the idea that the texts which it contained might be charged with a message suited to the solemn occasion, I lifted it, and read the following verses:—'But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all things shall be added unto you,' Matt. vi. 33. 'But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus,' Phil. iv. 19. That ticket, I need hardly say, I have carefully preserved, notwithstanding the dingy appearance which, in consequence of passing through so many hands, it had come to bear. The words came on my heart like a voice from heaven." *

At Latheron, Mr. Davidson writes: "The last load of furniture being despatched, I deliberately visited every room in the house for the last time, with very solemn feelings, and then took my departure—locking the door, and sending the key to the nearest proprietor—never, in all probability, to enter it again. That I felt this to be a very trying moment I have no wish to conceal. The loss of my stipend—which was the largest in the county (except the towns), and that of the glebe, which was of the same description, and upon which I had expended fully £200 in enclosing and subdividing it by stone fences, and otherwise ornamenting it—scarcely gave me a passing thought; for I believed we should be provided for, though by more limited means; and to this I felt perfectly willing to submit. But the leaving of the residence where I had lived for so many years, and in which I had enjoyed so much comfort and happiness, mingled, no doubt, with occasional heavy afflictions, did indeed deeply affect me at the time. Still, upon entering the cottage, where all things were speedily set in order, I felt cheered in

* Dis. Mss. xii. p. 2.

contrasting my own lot with that of many of my less favoured brethren, who were far worse accommodated; and especially that of the Saviour Himself, who, though Creator of all things, had not where to lay His head. With these reflections, we united in pouring out our hearts to God in grateful thanksgiving for enabling us to pass through this trying ordeal, and in committing ourselves to His fatherly protection for the future." *

Another remarkable case was that of Dr. Grierson, of Errol: "My stipend was one of the largest belonging to a country charge; my family was rather numerous; . . . their education being not only unfinished, but, in the case of the younger members, not advanced beyond its earlier stages; while the length of time that we had enjoyed the advantages of a liberal income . . . all served to increase the painfulness of the sacrifice which, from a sense of duty, we were constrained to make. I hope I shall be excused when I add that the external amenities of the home which for more than twenty years I had been seeking to improve, together with the richness and splendour of the extensive landscape of which it commanded a view, did not give it so strong a hold on my heart as that which it possessed from being the birthplace of all my children—the scenes of all their youthful joys and sorrows—and the house of mourning, from which I had successively conveyed the mortal remains of nearly one-half of their whole number to that resting-place on which my eye used to fall from Sabbath to Sabbath as I entered the house of God.

"When the last cart-load of furniture was despatched, and while the vehicle which was to convey my family to their new residence was getting ready, I went out, and took a last turn round my garden walks, and a farewell gaze on the scenery which I had so often viewed with admiration and delight. On returning, I went through every room and apartment of the house, as if to gather up the endearing or interesting associations with which they were connected. All was empty and desolate—the last fire was extinguished on the blackened hearth. The younger part of my family had entered the vehicle, but my

* Dis. Mss., Latheron, p. 3.

partner, waiting to enter it when all was ready to move, had sat down exhausted on the lower steps of the stair—the only seat then to be found. I raised her up, and placed her beside her children, and having locked the door behind her, I gave the key to the person who had been appointed to receive it. As the road at first was somewhat steep, I walked for some distance, . . . but looked not back with any desire to remain. I felt as if I heard the words of the prophet: 'Arise ye, and depart: for this is not your rest,' Micah ii. 10." *

The effect of these manse-flittings in a district cannot be understood without knowing what manner of men they were who sacrificed their all, and what place they held in the affections of the people. The Rev. Angus M'Millan was a native of Glen Sannox, in Arran, and working at his trade for self-support, had fought his way through a regular course at the University of Glasgow, studied divinity in Edinburgh, was licensed and appointed in 1812 to Lochranza, in Arran, a mission station, supported by the Duchess of Hamilton, where his income, without house or glebe, was £34 a-year. There he found himself in the midst of a remarkable revival, which spread over a large portion of the island, and of which he afterwards wrote an account. Of this movement he was for many years the centre, and his usefulness was still more marked when, in 1821, at the urgent entreaty of the people, he was presented to the parish of Kilmory. From 1821 to 1843 his ministry was greatly blessed, and when the day of trial came, he was found faithful. The leaving of the manse has been described by his early and attached friend, the Rev. A. Macbride, of North Bute:—

"The aged minister, his locks thin and silvery, his countenance pale and placid, his frame frail and emaciated, his whole appearance betokening a man who had seen length of service in his Master's vineyard, and . . . who had faithfully borne the burden and heat of many an anxious day, looked on till room after room was dismantled, and cart after cart had wound down by the side of the old churchyard, as calm and composed as if no change were taking place in his circumstances; and when the last cart returned to take himself away, he asked if all were ready. Being

* Dis. Mss. xi. p. 8.

told it was, 'Well, come in for a little; and entering the empty parlour which for twenty-two years had been his sitting-room, his study, and his sanctuary, he said, 'Let us pray.' The prayer chiefly consisted of adoration and praise, but towards the conclusion he earnestly implored that the same goodness and mercy which had hitherto followed them, might follow them till they reached the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. When engaged in prayer, he was frequently interrupted by the sobs of those around him; and once he was himself so overcome that he had to pause. When he finished prayer, he walked out of the house with his usual step, and having been assisted into the cart, he proceeded to the little thatched cottage at Clachaig, which devoted friendship had prepared for his reception—a cottage which he was soon to exchange for a mansion in his Father's house." *

Among the aged fathers of the Church, there were some whose great anxiety arose from a fear lest the hand of death should overtake them in the old manse, and so prevent the completeness of their testimony to the principles of the Free Church. There were three instances in which the wish of their hearts in this respect was denied. One was Mr. Abernethy, of Bolton, in East Lothian, a godly minister, "held in the greatest respect by all the brethren in the Presbytery and the people generally in the district. His health began to decline in the spring of 1843, and it was soon ascertained that he was labouring under an internal malady from which there was little or no prospect of recovery. . . . The parish church was preached vacant a few Sabbaths before his death, or, rather, was pronounced vacant, for no audience could be got to witness the ceremony." † He died in the manse, after severe suffering, on the 26th July, 1843, in the sixty-third year of his age.

A similar case was that of Mr. Logan, of Eastwood, born in 1759, a distinguished classical scholar at the University of Glasgow, and presented, at the instance of the celebrated Dr. Balfour, to the parish of Eastwood. He had proved himself a minister eminently learned and devoted in his Master's service. "His age had prevented his taking part in the struggles of the

* Parker Mss., Rev. A. M'Millan. † *Ibid.* Pres. of Haddington.

'Ten Years' Conflict,' but he warmly espoused the cause of the Church. There were not wanting friends who endeavoured to turn the aged servant of the Lord aside from the path of duty, alleging that it could not be expected that, at his age, lying, as he was, on a bed of languishing, he should leave the house where he had lived so long. He replied that he was simply obeying his Master—discharging a plain duty which love to his Lord demanded. In the spring of 1843 a friend [the Rev. Mr. Gemmell, of Fairlie] preached for him, and after sermon went in to see him, now confined entirely to bed, and began to speak with him on the perils of the Church. 'Yes,' said Mr. Logan, 'but I trust we shall at all hazards maintain the spiritual rights of our Zion. When Cæsar was crossing the Adriatic in a small vessel, the boatman hesitated and was afraid. Cæsar said, "*Ne timeas, Cæsarem vehis*" (Fear not, you carry Cæsar). Much more reason have we to say, "*Nil timendum Christo duce*"' (There is nothing to be feared with Christ for our leader). The old man, in repeating these words, elevated himself in bed, and, having pronounced them with a firm voice, immediately sank back, and laid his head upon the pillow, breathless and exhausted with the effort." "He died on the 2nd day of July, 1843, in the eighty-fifth year of his age and the fifty-eighth of his ministry." *

The third case was that of Dr. Ross, of Lochbroom. "When the Disruption came, he was very earnest as to sending up his signature and having it added to the Deed of Demission, and himself enrolled as a minister of the Free Church. He was anxious also to follow up the step by removing as soon as possible from the old manse. But what was to be done? . . . To attempt to remove him, even to the nearest house, would manifestly endanger his life. . . . God in His gracious providence solved the difficulty. He died in the old manse of Lochbroom, a sufferer from paralysis, on the 21st day of July, 1843, before the arrangements which were begun for his reception in another place could be completed. He expired in the seventy-fifth year of his age and fortieth of his ministry." †

Similar interest attaches to the case of Mr. Ferguson, of

* Parker Mss., Rev. G. Logan. † *Ibid.* Pres. of Lochbroom.

Marytown, near Montrose. He had been minister of the parish for about fifty years, and was from the first an adherent of the Evangelical minority in the Church at a time when it was weak in numbers. He cheerfully demitted his civil status as a parish minister at the Disruption. Not being able, from age and infirmity, to go to Edinburgh to sign the Deed of Demission, his signature was taken in his own manse a few weeks after the Disruption. Aware of his intention, two of his copresbyters called upon him, and urged him to remain in the Establishment, especially pressing his advanced age and the hardship of leaving his manse at his period of life; that in his circumstances none could reasonably expect this of him, and offering their services to get an assistant who should be acceptable to him. "He told me," says his son, "that he replied to them, 'I cannot abandon the principles I have held, or separate from the friends with whom I have acted through life.' The circumstances of his death were these:—The farm-house of Baldovie (the birthplace of Andrew Melville, and scene of his youth) was fitted up for his reception. On the day preceding his death, he left his manse, intending that evening to take up his abode at Baldovie, after spending a few hours at Marytown farm-house, which is about half-way between the manse and Baldovie. Here he was taken suddenly ill, and died next day at ten P.M." *

In connection with these "flittings" from the manse there occur, as was natural, various references to the minister's wife, on whom so much of the trial fell. Those opposed to the Church in her contendings calculated largely on men giving way out of feelings of regard for wife and children. In the last Strathbogie case, pled before the Court of Session in January, 1843, Mr. Hope, the Dean of Faculty—by no means given to the melting mood—grew pathetic as he appealed to the ministers of the Church, urging them to have regard to "the imploring looks and tearful eyes of their wives and children." He little knew those of whom he spoke. In many a manse, when the hour of trial came, the faith of the wife was at least as fearless as that of the husband. At Lesmahagow, Mrs.

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Brechin.

Parker writes, in that same month of January: "So far as I can judge, . . . the Church in her present struggles is doing no more than her duty to her great Head; and I trust she may be strengthened to go boldly forward. . . . No doubt the sword of power is against her, and, to all human appearances, about to fall on her; but that is no reason why any of her faithful ministers should swerve from the principles for which their fathers suffered. . . . I trust you will give me credit for being sincere in what I say. . . . No one values more than I do my present comforts, and few are less qualified for making sacrifices and enduring hardships, and sometimes my very heart is sore when I look at my dear children; but I trust that God in His providence may prepare a place for us—a sphere of duty where my dearest husband may exercise those gifts with which God has endowed him." Thus wrote the wife and mother, when the prospect was looking dark; and then, two months later, she returns to it: "Every day that passes only shows more clearly the necessity there is for leaving the Establishment. Oh! I hope it may issue in the purification of the Church, and the enlargement of our Redeemer's kingdom. We cannot look forward to be here now (I mean, in this house) much beyond May, and we are looking out for another. . . . I am expecting my aunt and sister next week, to take farewell of the manse." *

Dr. N. Paterson, of Glasgow, mentions an anecdote connected with the Convocation: "I was much strengthened by a conversation with an old college acquaintance, and now a faithful minister in the city of Aberdeen. We had spoken of the number of our children, and with respect to his own family he said —'If we are driven out we shall be as poor as any wanderers on nature's common, but I had a letter from my wife this morning, and she exhorts me to stand true, Give up all for Christ, and your peace shall flow like a river.'" †

In the manse of Farr, when the prospects of the Church were getting dark, Mrs. Mackenzie lay on her dying bed, "with seven children all unprovided for." "About nineteen months

* Dis. Mss. xxxi. pp. 7-9.

† *Witness* Newspaper, 7th December, 1842.

before the Disruption," her husband states, "it pleased the Lord to remove my wife by death, depriving me of a most affectionate and dutiful partner, and our children of one of the best of mothers. I trust it will not be considered irrelevant to mention here in regard to my wife that she felt a deep interest in the great Church question. That day on the evening of which she died, we had a prayer meeting in reference to the proceedings in the West Church of Edinburgh in August, 1841, and although exceedingly weak and much pained, yet quite collected, she insisted on my attending the meeting in church, and not to leave it until we concluded, unless she sent for me. But although the separation, after a union of twenty-five years, was to me and the children most painful, yet, when the Disruption came, I saw much of the Lord's goodness toward my partner, in removing her from the trials and privations which I with my children had to bear, as, from her delicate health, she could not so well endure them." *

One more example we give to show what brave hearts were in many of those manses. The Rev. Roderick M'Leod states: "When many were pleading with ministers the argument *ad misericordiam* to dissuade them from the final and decisive step out of regard to their wives and children, she [Mrs. M'Leod] wrote to her husband to Edinburgh, encouraging him to hold on in the course before him, adding that when some of her neighbours came to condole with her on her prospects, she having at the time twelve children entirely dependent on a scanty income, 'I got courage to tell them that I would rather hear of your death than of your denying your principles.' Truly she was a wife that did her husband good and not evil, all the days of her life." †

* Dis. Mss. xx. p. 2. † Parker Mss., Rev. R. M'Leod.

XVI. The Ministers' Reasons for Going Out.

The Disruption was now complete: stipend, church, and manse had been given up. We shall speak of the hardships which followed the sacrifice; but before doing so, some account must be given of the reasons which led men thus to abandon the Establishment. There has been much debate as to what were the true grounds of the Disruption. It would surely be best to let men speak for themselves, not merely the great leaders, but still more those ministers who took little part in the controversy, and whose statements were written down in their quiet homes either in 1843 or shortly afterwards.

Although the Deed of Demission was signed, as we have seen, firmly and without a murmur, and though the sacrifice brought its own satisfaction and relief, yet there are not a few statements in the Disruption Mss. which show the inward struggle through which many had to pass before the resolution was finally taken.

Thus a young minister wrote at the time—Mr. Stewart, of Aberdeen, who soon afterwards died, in early manhood, to the grief of many: "How many overpowering associations crowd on one's mind when thinking of leaving the Establishment! The Established Church of Scotland has been to me an object of idolatry. To be one of its ministers, to be received into the goodly company of its pastors, and set upon one of its watch-towers, was long the very crown of my ambition. And now, to be told that on account of the very principles which constitute its peculiar glory, and in my estimation always did so, I must quit the position to which, though most unworthy, I have been raised, goes to my very heart. How grievously our Legislators

misunderstand us. . . . I love my country. . . . I would die for her hoary institutions, and yet I am told that I am an enemy to order and social happiness." *

Dr. John Bonar, then of Larbert, states his own feelings and those of many others in view of the sacrifice: "Already poverty and destitution stare every minister in the face who will hold to the noble place which, by the grace of God, the Church has taken. Family, friends, dependant relatives, sickness, death, destitution, neglect, rise oft to the fancy. . . . Do people think we are not men? Do they think we are not men of like passions? Do they not know the weakness of human nature, and with such fightings without and fears—not for ourselves, but for what shall come on *them* who are more to us than ourselves on the earth—within, do they not think we eminently need the sympathies and prayers of all? But higher interests are at stake. 'Take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.' This swallows up everything else." †

Dr. Buchanan, of Glasgow, addressing his brethren in the Convocation, said that "the thought of a Voluntary Church was to him as darkness; but the pillar of fire would be there, and he would go as led."

Dr. Gordon, of Edinburgh, declared, "I do it most unwillingly, I am compelled by a force far more terrible to me than the baton of the constable, or the musket of the soldier—I am compelled by my conscience."

It has been the dream of many that the leaders of this movement were recklessly determined to urge on their own ambitious designs, and that their followers were hurried along under the impulse of blind partisanship. Nothing can be more fallacious.

On the part of the leaders, it is recorded that when Lord Aberdeen came forward with what professed to be a healing measure, "a friend, calling on another Church leader, found Dr. Cunningham and him going over the Bill. The former [Dr. C.] was in the deepest anxiety, and again and again

* Parker Mss., Rev. J. Stewart.

† Reasons for Religious People, &c., by the Rev. J. Bonar, p. 8.

returned to the Bill to pore over its clauses, as if he could not make up his mind to the cruel conviction that it kept carefully short of the essential and indispensable provisions, and that all the consequences of rejecting it must be faced." *

At the time of the Convocation, Dr. Candlish publicly declared that the position of the Church had not been hastily taken up: "On the contrary, I will say for myself, and for many of my fathers and brethren, that it is a position which we have most reluctantly taken, against the necessity of which we defended and guarded ourselves by all kinds of argument, and to which we shrank from committing ourselves. . . . But now, not of our own seeking, for God knows that we have sought anything but this, we have listened to every proposition, to every suggestion but this, we have been ready to conciliate, I fear we have been ready to compromise,—not of our own seeking, then, but in the leadings of God's providence, and by the teaching of His Spirit, we have again got that glorious watchword with which our fathers were so familiar." †

In regard to the more retiring country ministers, it is certain that never were there men who had greater reason to look narrowly to the grounds on which they were called to act; and we find them accordingly giving to the whole subject the most conscientious and thoughtful consideration. "I felt," Mr. Mackenzie, of Farr, writes after the Convocation, "the necessity of close application in private study, . . . especially in reference to the Supreme Headship of Christ. I felt the necessity of closer attention than ever to this infinitely important subject, as brought to light in the Scriptures, and, as stated, illustrated, and confirmed in the writings of godly witnesses in England and Scotland, who, for their adherence to the Redeemer in His Divine Headship over His Church, suffered persecution, imprisonment, and death. I felt the necessity of this, and that, by the Divine blessing, I might obtain to greater clearness and a firmer faith. . . . I have to confess, that in such exercises I felt much satisfaction." ‡

Mr. Mather, of Stanley, states: "I was led to reflect much

* Life of Dr. Cunningham, p. 152. Note by Dr. Rainy.

† *Witness*, 26th November, 1842. ‡ Dis. Mss. xx. p. 3.

on the great principles that were involved in the controversy, and to feel that no Church which abandoned these principles for the sake of secular advantage could expect the Divine blessing. And as the controversy proceeded, all hopes of an honourable and scriptural settlement of the question being taken away, my way was hedged in, like that of my brethren, to leave the Establishment. . . . It was a solemn season, and I often felt deeply awed and impressed during the Convocation, at the Disruption; and most of all, while signing the Deed of Demission, at the honour put on me, His unworthy servant, by my Divine Lord, in making me a witness for His truth." *

The results of such consideration appear in various statements which we meet with in the narratives.

Dr. Moody Stuart, of Edinburgh, presents the Bible aspect of the great question that was involved in the struggle: "While preaching in the district of Strathbogie," he says, "the labour and exposure had brought on a severe affection of the throat, for which I was ordered to Madeira. . . . Distance, time, quiet, sickness had altered or modified many of my thoughts. . . . In the silent retrospect of life, with the prospect of a possibly near eternity, much that had seemed first was now last, and the last was first; but the truth and magnitude of our Church's testimony to the Headship of Christ over His own house—even unto separation from the State—had only stood forth in greater clearness. After every deduction for the elements of earth that had mingled in the conflict, the great principles looked still greater than before, and the broad lines of procedure more brightly shone upon by the Word, by grace, and by Providence." †

His testimony was made yet more distinct by a brief address, delivered in remarkable circumstances: "The first verses of the 23rd of Luke were read and explained. Christ's kingdom is in the world, yet not of the world: the Church is subject and responsible to Him alone in the appointment and removal of pastors, and in the entire rule and discipline of His house. And she is unfaithful to her Head if she resigns that trust to

* Dis. Mss. v. pp. 2, 3.

† Life of the Last Duchess of Gordon, p. 263.

any other, or executes it at the command of the highest power on earth. Nor was the question a light one, since on it had hinged the death of our blessed Lord Himself. This truth was not the end for which He died, but it was the turning-point of His death. It was the good confession He had witnessed before Pilate, and it was because He would not retract His declaration that He was a King, that He was led to crucifixion. *If this truth was great enough for our Master to suffer death for declaring it, it could not be too little for us to accept as a ground of suffering, of imprisonment, or of death itself.*" *

Mr. Thomson, of Muckhart, was clerk to the Presbytery of Auchterarder, and, as was natural, he dwells on the legal and constitutional aspects of the question. Almost from the outset of the great lawsuit he had anticipated an adverse result. One circumstance which specially prepared his mind for the Disruption "was a clear exhibition of the hopelessness of our position, unless we were to prove traitors to Christ, brought before us at a private meeting of the brethren, held under St. George's Church in August, 1842, by our valued friend, Mr. John Hamilton, advocate, when he directed our attention to the circumstance, that all the decisions of the Supreme Civil Court rested in reality, not upon a rigid interpretation of the various Statutes, but upon this: 'There cannot be an *imperium in imperio.*' The whole truth, the peril, the hopelessness of our position then fully flashed upon my mind, and I saw the certainty of the coming event." †

Three years after the event, Dr. Burns, of Kilsyth, reviews his position. He is not insensible to the sacrifice he has made: "The breaking up of intercourse with the gentry of the vicinity, the loss of a commodious manse, where, for twenty-three years, much comfort was enjoyed, a good glebe of ten acres, a living of about £300 per annum, an elegant church, a status in society, &c.;" but he adds: "What is all this compared with the approba-

* Life of the Last Duchess of Gordon, p. 269.

† Dis. Mss. xxviii. p. 3. This view, asserting the supremacy of the civil power over both the civil and spiritual spheres, goes much deeper, it will be seen, than anything merely connected with the Patronage Act as an individual statute.

tion of conscience, and the peace of God keeping the heart and mind, the honour of taking a part in upholding the Crown rights of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of co-operating with the best of the ministers and elders in this land, the freedom from the most galling yoke of servitude being forced upon us, and last, not least, deliverance from the incubus and unequal yoking of what has been called Moderatism, impeding us in every spiritual and zealous movement, hedging us up from every attempt to benefit the poor people of any conterminous district. The incongruous union has continued by far too long, and coalition in future cannot be contemplated as possible." *

The sermon which Dr. Sievewright, of Markinch, addressed to his congregation on the first Sabbath after the Disruption will show how vigorously those country ministers, who took but little part in the conflict, were able to think and speak on the great questions at issue. "What doest thou here, Elijah?" was the text from which he addressed his people. "We are not willingly here. Nothing short of a great moral necessity has severed ties long and fondly cherished, involving an amount of sacrifice the incredulous world did reckon far beyond . . . our limited virtue to attain, . . . to renounce what toiling industry pants to acquire—a desirable home, an honourable competency, a certain and sufficient provision for life, together with an official position which, unless misconduct disgraces it, has usually commanded respect."

But, turning to the parishioners, he repeats the question, "What doest thou here?—here, in this limited and incommodious place, that little resembles a place of worship, and has many ideas associated with its ordinary uses that ill accord with the sanctity we fondly attach to a temple. Hard by, too, stands an edifice of more seemly appearance, . . . of old consecrated to the rites of Divine worship. There your fathers adored their fathers' God. There yourselves and your children were baptised into the faith and privileges of the Christian Church. There many of you have kept solemn holy days. . . . And is it, brethren, to you no sacrifice to turn your backs on so hallowed a spot, endeared by tokens of a Divine presence, by

* Dis. Mss. xxix. pp. 29, 30.

recollections of the living, and of the dead who sleep round its ancient tower, waiting for the restitution of all things? We are not here by a willing and costless transition. Wherefore, then, have we come? A great moral necessity enforced our removal. . . . The day has come when the Church Established has forfeited a just pretension to be regarded as the Church of Scotland, because she has departed from that Church's constitution and principles in two leading particulars—the supremacy of Christ as actual and acting Head of the Church, and the spiritual independence of the Church, which is His body. The regal supremacy of Christ is a doctrine written as with a sunbeam on many a page of Scripture. . . . His kingdom is not of this world, as Himself witnessed before Pilate; but yet that He was a King, and had a kingdom, He shunned not to avow in the presence of that imperious Roman. And if this be so—if Christ is living Head of the Church, and reigning King of Zion—what recognition and reverence are due to His Majesty, what respect and submission to His every ordinance and enactment! and has He given power to His servants to administer the affairs of His house, and shall these servants disclaim the power and forego the exercise of it in deference to secular usurpation? . . . And hath it come to this that a Christian Church . . . shall be treated as a mere civil corporation? . . . Shall we turn away from the King that God the Father hath put upon His holy hill, the King whom our ancient worthies there worshipped and obeyed? . . . From Him shall we go to Cæsar for redress, as if He who shall judge the world were of no account or estimation? Shall we ask leave of civil judicatories to bind and loose, to open and shut, ordain or depose, making diligent suit to them to tell us precisely what is right and what were wrong in questions of Church order and spiritual jurisdiction? Because we would not consent to this disparagement and defection, we stand before you this day divested of . . . all parish immunities."*

In addition to such sermons, a large proportion of the ministers, at the time when they left the Establishment, assigned

* A Protester's Apology for Quitting the Established Church, &c. pp. 4-10.

their reasons in the form of addresses, printed and circulated among their parishioners. Looking back from the distance of thirty years on this great array of pamphlets, one is struck by the prominence which they give to the one subject of the spiritual independence of the Church in connection with the Headship of Christ. Approaching the question at issue, as they do, in many different methods, this is the central point on which they all converge. We can give only a very few examples to illustrate the views which then prevailed.

One of the pamphlets which attracted notice was by Dr. M'Cosh, then of Brechin. He began by stating that he would find little difficulty in proving two things—"first, That the judges and statesmen of the land do hold that the Established Church is bound to obey them in spiritual matters; and second, That the Established Church has in its deeds (whatever may be its professions in words) taken orders from the Civil Courts in the most sacred spiritual matters, and given unto Cæsar the things that be God's." By an overwhelming array of proof he establishes the first of these positions, and then proceeds to inquire "how far the Church has acquiesced in that law. . . . Those who remained in the Establishment did so on the express understanding that they were to submit to the supremacy of the civil law. Where is now the party in the Church protesting against the acts or the language of our statesmen and judges? There is no such party, and there can be no such party; for the law and constitution are now settled, and it is in vain for persons to remain in any society, and protest against its constitution.

"How, then, did the General Assembly deal with those acts [of the Church] when the protesting party left in May, 1843? . . . The Assembly did not retain so much as the semblance of independent authority. It hastened to fling itself in abject prostration at the feet of its master. It declared that, because the Civil Court said so, the Veto was no law, and never had been a law of the Church, and that the Strathbogie ministers never had been deposed. . . . Was the Church obeying Christ or obeying the House of Lords in intruding Mr. Young into Auchterarder? We can point to the orders of the House

of Lords to this effect, but it is more difficult to point to the command of Christ in His Word. . . . Was the Church obeying Christ or obeying the Courts of law when it declared that between two and three hundred pastors of *quoad sacra* parishes, with their numerous elders, all elected according to Scripture, had no power to hold kirk-sessions, to admit communicants, to exercise discipline, or generally to rule in Christ's Church? We can point to many passages of God's Word in which it is said to be the duty of ministers and elders to rule in conformity to Christ's laws. . . . Where, then, was the Assembly's authority for declaring they should not rule? . . . I know they can give us the authority of the Court of Session; and if they say they were obeying that authority, I believe them. . . . Here we have a state of things in which the commands of Christ and those of the civil authority were manifestly opposed; and the Assembly, by obeying the latter, declared, in the face of the whole world, that they acknowledged it to be the true master of the house and head of the kingdom." . . . "It was because they felt that the fundamental principles and very constitution of the Establishment had been changed by the recent decisions that so many were constrained to abandon it by the highest of all compulsions—the compulsion of conscience and of duty."*

The address of Mr. Taylor, of Flisk, was called forth in remarkable circumstances. His settlement in the parish took place on the 14th of April, the very eve of the Disruption. "The manner of my entry at Flisk was very stormy, but God overruled it for good. Dr. Anderson, of Newburgh, officiated at the induction, and as he regarded himself as the mouthpiece of his party, he considered that something would be expected of him. . . . After putting the questions and receiving the suitable answers, the Dr. politely asked me to sit down, and in a carefully prepared address of about an hour's length, he condemned the agitation movements of the Evangelical party, and the Convocation deliberations, and praised the Church of Scotland as shaped and modelled by the decisions of the Law Courts, he took

* Does the Established Church Acknowledge Christ as its Head? By the Rev. J. M'Cosh, Brechin. 1846.

me bound by the solemn vows then administered to me not to leave the Church as by law established, and not to meddle with those who are given to change. The address to the people was much in the same strain. During its delivery the congregation looked on with a sober unmeaning gravity. Many of the Moderate brethren seemed to enjoy a great satisfaction as the roll of the Dr.'s artillery was directed against their opponents. One little incident there was which enlivened and gave character to the scene. An old man, blind Jamie Blyth, whose intellectual perceptions were keener than those of his neighbours, and who was most keen in his abhorrence of anything that savoured of Moderatism, listened patiently until he discovered the drift of the Dr.'s address, and then indignantly rising, he called, 'Hand me my hat, and let me to the door, for I canna thole this.'"

At the close of the address an animated discussion took place, in the course of which Mr. Taylor disclaimed the interpretation put on the ordination vows, and subsequently he published a reply to the address under the title of "A few words to the Parishioners of Flisk." He shows the change effected by recent decisions on the constitution of the Church of Scotland. Of that Church as set forth by Dr. Anderson he says: "This is not the Zion which was of old, . . . which Knox founded and Melville built up. These are not the bulwarks which Henderson, and Welsh, and Guthrie raised. This is not the carved work which the hands of Rutherford, and Boston, and Willison formed. This is not the Zion which was lately attacked, and on the battlements of which were seen the venerable forms of Chalmers, and Gordon, and Brown, and the day of whose danger called forth the youthful defence of Candlish, and Begg, and Buchanan, and gathered round her the weighty and talented support of such elders as Dunlop, and Crichton, and Spiers, and Monteith, and Buchan, and Collins. . . . That Establishment was an Establishment which claimed the power to do what Christ wills, and not the power of doing merely what the State allows. . . . Sooner far join with the Voluntary in saying, 'No Establishment,' than join with the Erastian in seeking a shackled and secularised one. . . .

"I have no interest in leaving the Establishment. Considerations of worldly interest call upon me to remain. There is not a morning I wake amid the song of early birds, there is not a time I saunter in the enclosures of this sweet solitude, every one of which tells of the taste of him who designed them, I never recline in its den, soothed by the soft sound of its falling waters, I never look forth to the distant hills which seem as a frame to the picture formed by Tay's broad waves, and the rich mansion-studded fields of Gowrie—but I feel the rising desire, here to stay. The harmonious and happy nature of my settlement, so far as you were concerned, your own kindness, of which I am daily receiving fresh instances, and instances the most abundant from quarters where they were least looked for, the size of the church and the extent of my parish, and the fear that if I am forced to leave this sphere of labour, my weakly health may be unable to contend with the excitements and increased labours of a secession state—all these things move me. But much as I value these things, I would wish to value my principles more. I would wish to prefer the honour of Christ as King in Zion, and the time-honoured testimony of the Church of Scotland, 'that she is free in her government from all other jurisdictions except Christ's,' and the Christian rights of her Christian people. To these principles I am pledged: from them I cannot, I dare not—God strengthening me—I will not go back." *

In addition to the addresses from which these extracts have been taken, there is a long series, in which the questions at issue were ably handled. One by Mr. Wood, of Elie (then of Westruther), was widely circulated. It contained an elaborate discussion of the kingly office of Christ in the visible Church, with an explanation of what is meant by "the power of the keys," and after showing how the spiritual authority thus conferred on the Church had been invaded and overthrown by the Law Courts, he argued that, "If the Statutes warrant these decisions, then no Church of Christ can remain without sin in connection with the State under these Statutes." †

Another which met with much acceptance was by Mr. Gregory,

* A Few Words to the Parishioners of Flisk, pp. 14, 15.

† Present Duty, Pastoral Address, &c., fourth thousand, p. 7.

of Anstruther, then of Roxburgh Church, Edinburgh, in which the meetings of the Convocation were held. He enters fully into the matter of Christ's Headship, explaining clearly the great principle of spiritual independence, and then points out the state to which the Established Church had been reduced. She holds her emoluments on this condition, that she "shall take laws and directions from the civil authorities, instead of Christ, in spiritual things, and shall, through her office-bearers, settle ministers over reclaiming congregations. There is no disguising or denying this. . . . We dare not hold by State endowments, as we should be free of the fearful sin of selling our allegiance to our King for filthy lucre." *

Enough has now been said to show the general drift of these addresses, which came from many of the ablest and most devoted ministers all over the country. But there is one additional statement which must not be omitted—the letter of an aged minister, Mr. M'Kenzie, of Tongue, whom the trials of the Disruption sent to his grave, under painful circumstances, to be afterwards noticed. The reader will observe how the firmness of his decision was great in proportion to the painful struggle through which he had to pass. Addressing Mr. Pitcairn, clerk to the Convocation, he says, under date 29th December, 1842: "I write to intimate my adherence, as minister of Tongue, to all the resolutions of the late Convocation at Edinburgh. I resolved this from the first communication to me, but immediately thereafter, being assured by local authority that no separatist would be permitted to remain as officiating minister within the bounds of the Presbytery, all the property of the Duke of Sutherland; agonised at the thought of parting with my beloved, sympathising, and attached parishioners; haunted by the denunciations of Scripture against the shepherds who leave their flocks, suffering them to wander on the mountains and hills, to be meat for the beasts of the field, my resolution was staggered for a time, and I paused to examine the subject more fully by the light of Scripture, by meditation and prayer, more especially as from my age and infirmities, obliged lately to engage an assistant, I could

* Good reasons for leaving the present Ecclesiastical Establishment, &c., sixth thousand, pp. 7, 8.

expect no other sphere to exercise my worn-out faculties in my Master's vineyard, and could not readily reconcile myself to be wholly excluded, silent, and useless. At length, with clear light and a good conscience, I said, Come what will, and whatever the sacrifice I must render, that no proposed good can sanction doing evil to attain it, that nothing can warrant my remaining in an Erastian Church, and allying myself with ministers who would consent to make the Church of Christ a creature of the State, . . . and its servants only to be the slaves of a worldly tyranny—not the commissioned office-bearers of Zion's King, teaching only the doctrines of His instruction, and ruling only for the glory of His name, and the spiritual interests of His purchased inheritance. With unceasing prayer for the success of the objects of the Convocation resolutions and memorial, from God and man, and fully resolved to embark and keep embarked with them, assured theirs is the ship in which Christ is, and which shall be safe, however tossed or likely to perish, when He sees meet to interpose and give the command to be still."

We close these statements with one remarkable case, in which *old age* is assigned as one reason for going out. "For fifteen months previous to the Disruption, Mr. Anderson, of Kippen, suffered from a severe illness, which laid him aside from ministerial work. In 1843 he demitted his charge, and preached during the summer in the open air, and occasionally in a barn. The outward hardships, however, which he underwent were slight compared with the scorn of former friends. He 'suffered shame' for his Master—he became 'a fool for Christ's sake;' for those who had no sympathy with his principles could only brand his sacrifice as an act of aggravated folly, especially considering his advanced time of life. Such objections, however, were thoroughly met by his own words, 'The older I am, I have the more need to be faithful.' He lived only a year and a-half after the Disruption. . . . He died on the 27th of March, 1845, in the 66th year of his age, and 34th of his ministry. It is but just to state that the painful opposition referred to wore away with his life, and disappeared in his grave. His funeral was a remarkable evidence of this. All, without exception, united in the last tribute to his worth, while his widow and his son gladly acknow-

ledge their obligations to his memory. They deeply feel that much of the favour withheld from him during his trial has since descended on them for his sake. 'Them that honour me I will honour.'" *

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Stirling.

XVII. Reasons for Going Out given by the People.

What made the Free Church movement so formidable was the extensive support which it received from the laity, not only among the leading elders, but among the general population. Their reasons were various. Personal attachment to the outgoing ministers was a strong inducement on the part of many; but it is obvious that if that had been all, the movement, instead of being what we now see it, would soon have lost its hold amidst the changes of succeeding years. There must have been some far more deeply-seated and powerful impulse which swayed the popular mind. And this is all the more obvious when we consider the numerous cases in which respected parish ministers remained in the Establishment, while the people took their own course, and formed Free Church congregations.

One reason which powerfully influenced many was their opposition to the preaching and policy of what were called "the Moderates." The origin of this Moderate party (the name is of their own choosing), is usually traced back to that class of ministers who changed from Presbytery to Episcopacy, and from Episcopacy to Presbytery, as each party rose into the ascendant. After the Revolution of 1688, the presence of such men ("the court party," as Dr. M'Crie styles them) was felt as a great weakness to the Church. Unfortunately, as time went on, their influence increased, till, in 1734, they cast out the Erskines and other Seceders; and by a still more flagrant abuse of power in 1752, deposed Gillespie, the founder of the Relief Synod. Then the free-thinking spirit of the age began to prevail in their ranks, till, publicly and privately, all strictness of doctrine was discarded. It is now known that if it had been safe, they would have thrown aside the Confession of Faith. In

1796 they passed an Act of Assembly condemning Christian missions, and in 1799 another forbidding the pulpits to all ministers of any other denomination; their object in thus cutting themselves off from Christendom being to exclude the earnest Gospel ministrations of such men as Simeon of Cambridge.

All through the Ten Years' Conflict this party identified themselves with the proceedings of the Civil Courts, and at the Disruption the Established Church passed into their hands, with its constitution moulded according to their Moderate views—the old scriptural constitution of the Scottish Establishment being thus completely and, it is feared, finally overthrown, as regards the vital question of spiritual independence.

From the commencement of the century the Moderate party had begun rapidly to lose ground before the rising power of Evangelism, led on by the late Sir Henry Moncreiff, Dr. Thomson, and Dr. Chalmers. Some of their number—not a large section—became themselves evangelical in sentiment and zealous in action, while still holding the anomalous position of being Moderates in policy. There were others who held by the doctrines of the Confession in all their strictness, but who had little zeal in their ministerial work. The great mass of the party, however, still continued to be what they had been before. There was much ground for the strong view taken by Hugh Miller: "We have but one Bible and one Confession of Faith in our Scottish Establishment, but we have two religions in it; and these, though they bear exactly the same name, and speak nearly the same language, are yet fundamentally and vitally different." In Church politics the single rule of the Moderate party was to uphold the views of the Civil Courts and to maintain patronage; while, in regard to the usual style of their pulpit ministrations, the following estimate may be accepted as a close approximation to the truth: "In theology the Moderate inclines to what is loosely styled Arminian doctrine, although Arminius himself would have disowned it, but what may be more properly called legal doctrine. He exhibits the precepts of Christianity apart from the remedial and strengthening grace of Christianity. Somehow, although he may not state it, he leaves his hearers to think that man is

the author and finisher of his own salvation. Even many of the Moderate clergy who profess a sounder creed than that we have described are most confused in their statements of what the Gospel is. With them it is a Yea and a Nay Gospel, compounded of alternate averments and retractations." *

Such was the class of ministers whose preaching and policy had for long been distasteful to the Scottish people; and, as may well be understood, the feeling of dislike became only the more intense in proportion as the revived spirit of religious earnestness spread over the country. For two or three generations many of the more earnest members of the Church had been gradually going over to the Seceders, and even among those who clung to the Establishment there were large numbers who did so with extreme reluctance and dissatisfaction. In Lesmahagow, Dr. Parker thus describes the situation: "In this quarter a change took place to the worse, similar to what has been observed in other districts of Scotland. . . . The Upper Ward of Lanarkshire was for many years previous to the Disruption characterised by a painful apathy on religious subjects. The ministers belonging to the Establishment were for the most part of the Moderate school; the few who professed different principles did not manifest much zeal in their propagation and defence. . . . Meetings for prayer and fellowship were almost wholly unknown, and the discipline of the Church had sunk in many cases into a vain and lifeless form. It must not be forgotten, however, that, while many a pulpit gave forth an uncertain sound, and little was done by direct ecclesiastical agency to advance the cause of Christ, there were families not a few in which pure religion found a home. The children were diligently instructed in the Scriptures and the Shorter Catechism, domestic worship was regularly observed, the writings of the old divines were eagerly and assiduously perused, and everything contrary to good morals was carefully repressed. They remained reluctantly within the pale of the Establishment, little edified by the Sabbath lessons to which they listened, but indulging the hope that better days would come—that God would again visit the vine which His own right hand had

* Memoir of D. M. M. Crichton. By Rev. J. W. Taylor, p. 206.

planted, and revive His work in the midst of the years. They watched with growing interest the advance of evangelical sentiment in the Church of their fathers. They rejoiced when these sentiments gained the ascendancy in the General Assembly, and they were gradually prepared, when the day of trial and the hour of separation came, to cast in their lot with the protesting minority of her faithful ministers." *

In the North, we find the Duchess of Gordon, after her widowhood, thus lamenting her isolation at Huntly: "It is really a trial to feel that the truth is preached in the dissenting chapels; but then they are Voluntaries, and here am I on a hill. O for wisdom, and, above all, grace and love!" †

Now, it should be remembered that, up to the time of the Disruption, Scotland was still, to a large extent, in the hands of this school of divines, and they had the people at their mercy; for by a law of the Church no minister could preach in the parish of any other minister without his permission. It is well known that Dr. M'Donald, of Urquhart, narrowly escaped rebuke at the bar of the Assembly, for having, without leave from the parish minister, preached to people who were longing to hear the Gospel from his lips.

How irksome this state of matters was in many of the parishes need not be said. There were some of the ministers who felt it keenly, as may be seen from an entry in the diary of Mr. M'Cheyne: "Have been laying much to heart the absolute necessity laid upon the Church of sending the Gospel to our dead parishes during the life of the present incumbents. It is confessed that many of our ministers do not preach the Gospel —alas! because they know it not. Yet they have complete control over their own pulpits, and may never suffer the truth to be heard there during their whole incumbency. And yet our Church consigns these parishes to their tender mercies for perhaps fifty years without a sigh." ‡

Here, then, was one ground on which the Disruption was heartily welcomed by many of the people. It broke the monopoly. Ministers and laymen, in regard to the preaching of a free Gos-

* Dis. Mss. xxxi. p. 2. † Life, p. 226

‡ Memoir, p. 140.

pel, escaped from under the trammels of Moderatism. Ministers might preach and the people hear the message of salvation whenever there was an opportunity.

This, indeed, was a change for which it appears many had been longing and praying. It was so at Luss, in Dumbartonshire. 'The people of the parish were church-goers, and nothing more. There were a few, however, who mourned over the prevalent apathy, and as they talked apart with each other on the Sabbath day among the gravestones in the churchyard, cried out, 'What a dead place this is!' or, after they had thought over it in their dwellings, 'How long is this to last?' Surely those who were thus sighing for spiritual life . . . were inwardly preparing for what was to come." *

In a similar way, in Strathbogie, it is stated: "I have been often told by humble Christians in Huntly, who were brought to the love of the truth, that, just before the suspension of the seven ministers, many among them felt a craving for something they did not well know what; and when the Assembly's ministers were sent down, . . . I believe it was the almost universal feeling—This is the very thing we needed. . . . This is the thing we have been seeking." †

In the same district there was one who spake yet more emphatically. "'Nobody need tell me about the Moderates,' said the Duchess of Gordon. 'I know them well. I should never think of consulting them on any religious subject, or asking them to my house for spiritual profit. All I can do is to invite them to dinner, when the Duke of Richmond is here, with the farmers at the cattle show.' . . . In the end of December, 1837, soon after her return to Huntly Lodge, we find her writing these striking words: 'We must pray very, very hard for more labourers in the Lord's vineyard, and that He may send us pastors after His own heart. I do not see where they are to come from at all, and therefore I think I can pray with the more entire faith, and feel sure that the Lord will give them in His own time and way.'" ‡

At Huntly, a young woman from the country said: "The

* Dis. Mss. xxx. pp. 1, 2. † *Ibid.* x. p. 2.

‡ Life, p. 226.

rich folk talks about la', la'; we puir folk ken naething about the la', but we ken fine fa's the best preachers."*

Further to the North, it is stated that "all the people throughout the whole county of Caithness, who had been noted for their piety long before the Disruption took place, most cordially embraced the principles of the Free Church. This knowledge of our having an interest in the prayers of these Christians most undoubtedly had a very powerful effect in sustaining us in the path of duty."†

But, apart from the question of evangelical preaching, there were many of the humbler ranks who well understood the great question that was at issue, and were as ready as their forefathers to repudiate the policy of Moderatism. Mr. Lewis, of Dundee, says of his own congregation: "Many were doubtless carried away by personal liking for the minister, and many of the young by national feeling and generous sympathy with those about to make a sacrifice for what they regarded as principle and duty; but, on looking over the list of adherents, it was obvious that both the intelligence and heart of the congregation were with us. . . . All who had been most ready to do aught for the young through weekly and Sabbath schools—all who took an interest in missions in our Church at home and abroad—all who were readers of Scottish history, or ever took any interest in questions peculiarly national and Scottish. The older members were with us almost to a man among the working classes, recognising the contest as the old question, and not being able to understand how a Church of Christ could part with her right of self-government for any civil or State advantages. The new name for an Established Church, '*the creature of the State*,' seems to them inexpressibly odious. Nothing less than denying its Divine origin, and shrivelling it up into a mere instrument of civil government and police."‡

At the close of his farewell sermon at Latheron, Mr. Davidson summoned a meeting of session, to be held next day, to afford the elders an opportunity of declaring their sentiments on a matter so important. Accordingly, he states: "Met in session

* Life, p. 240. † Dis. Mss. xxv. p. 2.

‡ Parker Mss., Pres. of Dundee.

as proposed, and the elders having been asked to declare their sentiments as to the altered state of matters, and their own intention thereanent, George Mackay, the senior elder, after a pause and prayer for direction, said that he had no hesitation as to the course they should take, that he approved heartily of the manner in which their ministers had contended for the liberty with which Christ had made His people free, and prayed that grace might be given them to persevere, and cast their burden upon the Lord, who would not fail them in the day of trial. He blessed God that they had been privileged to witness for His cause, and pitied the poor Moderates who, like Esau, had sold their birthright for their stipend, but expected no better of them. He cordially adhered to the Free Protesting Church of Scotland, and would only say, Jehovah-jireh. All the other six elders expressed themselves in similar terms, and without the least hesitation." *

It must be admitted that there were cases of a different kind. Some of the people were sorely perplexed by the movement. Speaking of the farmers generally in the neighbourhood of Flisk, Mr. Taylor remarks: "The Disruption was to them a mystery. It seemed in their eyes madness that men should give up temporal advantages, glebes, and stipends, when no man was touching them, and when we could preach what we chose without interference. A Flisk farmer speaking to a friend of mine about the folly of my leaving the Establishment, my friend said that it was right that I should follow the light and guidance of my own conscience. 'Conscience! conscience!' said the farmer, 'it's a puir conscience that'll no rax' [stretch].†

A second story from Dunbog sets the matter in a similar light. "A month or two after the Disruption, a Moderate farmer, in a parish whose minister had remained faithful to Christ, was making some inquiry as to how his former minister was getting on, and, amongst other things, was told in reply, he was preaching better than ever. 'Indeed! well, that is too bad. He had a good stipend with us—was well paid for preaching—and if he didn't do his best it was too bad. And now,

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Latheron, p. 4.
† Dis. Mss. xxxvii. pp. 11, 12.

when he gets less for it, he is preaching better. It's a great shame.'" *

It would appear that some of those who remained in the Establishment had a secret consciousness that they were not following the path of duty When Mr. Manson, of Fyvie, on the third Sabbath after the Disruption, was driving in his gig to the barn where he was to preach, he tells us: "I met an aged parishioner wending his way to the parish church. As my gig neared him, with a respectful salutation, and apologising, evidently under deep feeling, he laid hold of the bridle reins of my horse, and looking up to me, said, 'Turn, Mr. Manson, turn.' 'Ah, no, J——,' I remarked, 'it is you that should turn. My course is taken, and I stated the grounds of it to you in the church a few Sabbaths ago. 'Well,' was the reply, 'we are maybe nae a' richt; I dinna say that I think it, but couldna ye jist come back and tak' yer place amongst us again, and be as Naaman was, when he bowed himself in the house of Rimmon, saying, The Lord pardon thy servant in this thing.'" †

Another incident, which took place at Muthill, Perthshire, illustrates the same truth in yet more striking circumstances. "A farmer, a man advanced in life, and with a large family, had all along shown an enmity to us of an almost incredible kind. His wife and family were friendly to our cause, and were determined at all hazards to join us. This made him furious. When any of his family failed to attend the parish church and came to ours his rage knew no bounds. He was a man of very violent temper, and he spoke and acted on such occasions in a way which made his neighbours ashamed, and filled them with alarm for the consequences. Every week added to his rage, and he had almost succeeded by sheer violence in making his family desert the cause. This continued for three months or so. The neighbours at last interfered, but only made matters worse. All his rage was, however, suddenly and remarkably subdued. One day while he was blasting stones, a shot exploded in his very face. He was dangerously hurt, his eyes almost destroyed, and his face fearfully disfigured. Almost the very first use he made

* Parker Mss., Rev. Mr. Murray, Dunbog.

† *Ibid.* Rev. Mr. Manson, Fyvie.

of his speech was to assure those who came to his assistance that he would never speak any more against the Free Church, and never object to his family attending it. Accordingly, they have had full liberty and peace to attend ever since."*

There were many who hesitated long before they could take the step. "One of the most zealous adherents in this parish (Deskford), desirous of persuading as many as he could to enlist themselves on what he believed to be the Lord's side, was answered by some of them that they would wait till they saw. He replied that it was not very like valiant soldiers, to lie behind a dyke and leave others to bear the brunt of the battle."†

At Kilsyth, on the morning after the farewell sermon at the Established Church, a meeting of the elders and friends was held at seven o'clock. "About forty came. After joining in prayer and praise, various resolutions were passed. . . . Previous to this, a few minutes past 6 A.M., Matthew Adam, the beadle, who had adhered for one day to the Establishment, . . . came to the manse, declaring that he had stayed in too long, comparing himself to the son who said at first, 'I will not,' but afterward repented and went." ‡

In the midst of all this, however, the strongest encouragements by which, under God, the ministers were sustained, was the intelligent support of so many of the best of their people. Even those in the humblest ranks often knew, and could state in few words, the great truths that were contended for; and if the mode of expression was sometimes homely, it often bore the true stamp of Scottish character.

Thus, in one of the Ayrshire parishes, a plain man settled the controversy in a simple way: "Wha would think o' going to the Court o' Session to ask the way o' salvation for a sinner, and why should men think o' going to that Court to ask how to govern Christ's Church?" §

Dr. A. Bonar records a statement found on the blank-leaf of a Bible, belonging to a poor woman in Collace, who had borne more bodily pain than could well be believed, and who expected

* Dis. Mss. viii. p. 11.
† *Ibid.* xv. p. 9.
‡ *Ibid.* xxix. p. 35.
§ *Ibid.* i. p. 6.

soon to be taken to Him who had given her the heart to love Him. It was her testimony to the Crown-rights of Christ. "I write this 22nd May, 1843, after a long time of extreme pain and sore temptation, out of a full heart, feeling the love wherewith the Lord has loved me. It was on Tuesday, after all the beloved servants of God and people left the Established Church of Scotland, because the laws of Christ were denied in her. So, in the strength of Jesus, I desire to stand by my Father's cause. This I write to comfort my mother when I am gone."

Mr. Robertson, of Gartly, tells of a poor woman in his congregation who took a deep interest in the question. "When a paper was being sent round the parish for ascertaining the number of our adherents, she said she would sign it if she had a hundred hands." †

"William Weir, one of the outgoing elders (Lesmahagow), who was very frail at the time of the Disruption, and who has since been removed by death [1846], was pressed to remain in the Establishment on the ground that his days could not be many. He replied, 'It's never too late to do weel. I canna remain in the house when my Master is shut out.'

"An aged widow, a warm advocate of Moderatism and the Establishment, called on one of my elders (Lesmahagow) soon after the close of the Assembly of 1844. She remarked to him that both Assemblies got on very well—she saw no difference between them. He said he thought there was a little difference, for in the old Assembly, when any difficulty arose, they referred to Lord Aberdeen's Act to see what *it* said, but in the Free Assembly they referred to the Word of God. The old woman . . . rose abruptly, and left the house." ‡

But not only could they thus express their views in brief and homely words, they could, when occasion called for it, argue the question at length. At Ochiltree, in Ayrshire, Mr. Boyd, the parish minister, saw it his duty to remain in the Establishment; and after doing so, he complained publicly from the pulpit, and afterwards in print, that so many of his people had

* Dis. Mss. xxi. p. 4. † *Ibid.* xvii. p. 7.

‡ *Ibid.* xxxi. p. 30.

left him without giving their reasons. A working man, Mr. John Andrew, a hand-loom weaver, undertook to supply the omission in name of himself and his friends, and it is to be hoped that the parish minister was pleased with the result. His letter deserves to be read by those who wish to judge whether the common people of Scotland understood the question then at issue. "You are right, reverend sir, . . . in supposing that we are not guided by any personal dislike to you. . . . When you remember that we always cherished and manifested a becoming respect, esteem, and affection for you, . . . and were ever ready to aid and assist you in every Christian enterprise, you cannot but be convinced that we are actuated by higher than personal considerations. . . .

"You speak of attempts . . . to convert your peaceful parish into a scene of strife and warfare. We recognise no such melancholy state of things. . . . The liberty we take to ourselves in leaving the Church, that liberty we willingly give to our brethren who stay behind us. We are disposed for charity, and are willing to believe their motives good, and if they act on the same principle, and walk in the same spirit, all bitterness . . . must soon die away. . . .

"In speaking of yourself as a minister of the venerable Church of Scotland, you say you are as *free, unfettered, and independent* as ever. . . . The assertion seems more bold than true. Pardon us, reverend sir, if we say we do not believe it. . . . We know, indeed, you are free to preach, administer the sacraments, marry, visit, and the like. These are parts of the ministerial office, with the liberties of which the State has not as yet interfered. But here your freedom ends, for as a member of Presbytery in the settlement of ministers, . . . you are bound, under pains and penalties, to act, it may be not according to your own conscientious view, but according to the independent will of the patron, and the determination of the Civil Courts, and to place a minister not only against the conscientious objections of the people, but against the conscientious objections of the Presbytery itself—a state of things diametrically opposite to the original liberties of the Established Kirk of Scotland, subversive of our natural birthright, and at variance with the Word of Almighty

God. . . . The plain, unvarnished truth is, that by the late decisions of the Civil Courts, . . . the freedom and independence, such as it was which you enjoyed two years ago, has been totally uprooted and taken away. . . . *The State has declared itself your master, without a check or limit to your servitude, save its own good pleasure.* . . .

"And now, in taking farewell of you, reverend sir, permit us to entreat you to reconsider the subject. . . . We can and we do appreciate your good qualities as well as others, and sorry would we be to say one word unnecessarily to wound your feelings. . . . May the God of love and peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect in every good work; . . . and may He promote between us and our brethren who remain under your care the spirit of love and goodwill." *

The earnestness, indeed, with which the people made the cause their own is seen especially in those parishes where, as in Ochiltree, the ministers remained in the Establishment. We give one of these cases in full detail, in order to illustrate the way in which the matter was conducted when in the hands of the laity.

At Johnstone, Renfrewshire, it is stated that in March, 1843, "two elders from Bridge-of-Weir, Mr. Gemmill, teacher, and Dr. Munro, along with two elders from Paisley, Mr. Archibald Gardner, writer [and Mr. Archibald Hodge, banker], met by agreement in Johnstone, in the shop of Mr. Archibald Watson, along with four Johnstonians, Messrs. Nesbit Thomson, baker; John Maxton, joiner; James Laird, boot and shoemaker; and Mr. Archibald Watson, boot and shoemaker, tenant of the place of meeting. At this meeting steps were taken for diffusing information on the Church question throughout the town and neighbourhood. Mr. Alex. Steel, minister of the Free Church at Dalry, and then a preacher, had a school in Quarrelton, beside Johnstone. The second meeting of the committee was held in it. The original committee, joined by Messrs. Joseph Laird, teacher; Robert M'Nair, spinner;

* Farewell Address of the Free Presbyterians of Ochiltree to the Rev. James Boyd, their late Pastor.

Mr. Richard Gardner, and others, was very active. They obtained parties to lecture on the subject. . . . The town was divided into districts, and carefully visited, when it was found that about 140 expressed their intention to leave the Establishment unless the demands of the Church were granted by Government." At the first meeting of the Free Church Presbytery, the Court was induced to take Johnstone under its fostering charge. "A hall in M'Dowall street was obtained as a place of worship for the infant congregation, in which it regularly worshipped for about two years. The Rev. Mr. Makellar, son of the Rev. Dr. Makellar, of Pencaitland, was sent to labour in Johnstone, and there he laboured faithfully and diligently for about two months. . . . Shortly after my induction, a church was built on a favourable site, granted free of feu-duty by Mr. Graham, of Fernese. The opening collection amounted to £103, a large collection for a few poor people, and the largest ever made in Johnstone. A certain party would not believe we had made such a collection, and observed some of us had put the greater part of it in the plate in order to make a show, and had had it returned on Monday morning. I said the Free Church knew better than to return what was given to her. The Johnstone Free Church cost about £1100, but it had subsequently to be repaired at an expense of £500. In three years there were 250 members and 120 adherents." *

Nothing was more touching in all that time than the zeal and self-sacrifice with which even the poorest of the people threw themselves into the work—widows, in many instances, casting their mite into the treasury unasked. Three of the cases recorded in the Disruption Mss. will show the kind of spirit which pervaded the country.

At Deskford, Mr. Innes remarks: "Some of my congregation, who are very poor, must, I am sure, exercise no inconsiderable degree of self-denial to enable them to contribute as they do. I may here mention a small anecdote of one of them who, though in very sober circumstances, values herself not a little on her being of the same family with the great and good Samuel Rutherford. When the time of the Disruption was

* Dis. Mss. xlii.

drawing nigh, . . . she called one morning upon one of my elders, and put into his hands a crown piece (5s.), saying, 'There, tak' this, John; I have been makin' an eedol o't [making an idol of it]. That's hansel to your new kirk.' . . . It is almost unnecessary to say she has been contributing since with distinguished liberality in proportion to her means—giving very much in the spirit of her who gave her two mites; and she says she was never better off than since she has been doing so.' *

Mr. Murray, at Newburgh, in Fife, says: "Margaret —— was a saving, thrifty woman. As her former minister was a Moderate, and she rarely ever saw a newspaper, she knew nothing of the Disruption till it took place; but when it came it stirred her whole soul, and, as in many other cases, it opened her heart. Her new minister, having recently come to her neighbourhood, knew at first but little of her. One day he saw an elderly woman without her bonnet, with a white cap and a black ribbon round it, coming towards his house. She had her apron drawn together as if containing something rather heavy. He could not guess what her errand would be. On sitting down, she opened out her apron, and there were twenty pounds, seven in one-pound notes and thirteen in silver—the gatherings of many a day's, or rather of many a year's, winding of pirns—all which she now offered to the Lord, to be divided among the schemes of the Church. It was all her living." †

At Dundee, Mr. Lewis, after mentioning some of the higher contributions, states: "The largest in the eye of Christ was one offered by an aged woman, little removed from pauperism, who, at one of my ministerial visits, produced from its many wrappings a piece of gold which she had received recently from America. I thought to refuse it, but remembered that Christ would not have denied her the pleasure of contributing to His cause out of her poverty, 'more than they all.' Her name —the only one by which she was known in the congregation—was 'Betty.'" ‡

* Dis. Mss. xv. p. 5.

† Parker Mss., Mr. Murray, of Newburgh.

‡ *Ibid.* Rev. G. Lewis, Dundee, p. 18.

It was thus that people of all ranks, rich and poor, showed their earnestness on behalf of the cause which they had at heart; and when this spirit was abroad there was little cause to wonder at the way in which the money was provided. Already, in February, 1843—three months before the Disruption—Dr. Chalmers speaks of it as coming in "like a set rain at the rate of a thousand pounds a-day." *

* *Witness* Newspaper, 18th February, 1843.

XVIII. A Confirmation.

One of the most striking confirmations of Free Church principles was given in 1843 by the General Assembly of the Establishment itself. On the 18th May, as we saw, Dr. Welsh read from the chair a solemn Protest, formally stating the grounds on which the constitution of the Establishment was held to have been fatally vitiated. When in the act of retiring, he laid that Protest on the table, and left it lying openly there for all who remained behind to answer it if they could.

To do the Moderate party justice, the challenge was accepted bravely enough. When they found themselves masters of the situation, and had taken the Established Church into their hands, Dr. Cook, their leader, brought the subject formally before the House. "It will be proper," he said, "that an examination of the minutest kind should be made of this Protest, that a formal answer to it should be drawn up, which should be widely circulated through the country." A committee of Assembly was accordingly appointed, who, no doubt, after doing their best, reported to a subsequent diet. It appeared that three separate forms of answer had been prepared, but after due consideration, the House had no difficulty in coming to a unanimous decision : *These answers would not do.*

On this, Mr. Robertson, of Ellon, afterwards Professor Robertson, of Edinburgh, proposed a resolution (a most reasonable one in the circumstances), to the effect that "a paper so important as the Protest under consideration requires to be answered with greater care, and with fuller leisure for mature deliberation, than it was found possible to give it during the pressure of business, that the General Assembly recommit the whole case for the further consideration of their committee, and instruct them accordingly to report on the whole case to

the Commission in August." This proposal was supported by Dr. Cook, who suggested that "the best wisdom of the House" should be given to the matter, and in order to secure this the committee was enlarged.

The challenge, then, had been publicly accepted, and the Established Assembly had pledged themselves to answer the Protest. Nearly three months were allowed for mature deliberation, the best wisdom of the House was engaged, and what was the result? *Will it be believed that the whole ended in failure?* The more the committee looked at the Protest, the less they seem to have liked it. The appointed time came, the meeting of Commission in August was duly held, other business was disposed of, and a separate diet was fixed for hearing the answer to the Protest. *But no House was made,* and nothing more was ever heard of the subject, either in the Commission or the Assembly. After bravely pledging themselves to frame a reply which was to be "circulated widely through the country," engaging "the best wisdom of the House," and taking time "for mature deliberation," the whole thing collapsed. Not even the strongest supporters of the Establishment could feel surprised if, in these circumstances, men very generally drew the inference that THE PROTEST WAS LEFT UNANSWERED, BECAUSE IT WAS FOUND TO BE UNANSWERABLE.

The truth is, that the proceedings of that Assembly itself in 1843 had made it an exceedingly awkward thing even to attempt an answer. It would never have done to go before the public without claiming for the Established Church some kind of spiritual independence and freedom. But there lay the difficulty. The Assembly had resolved after consideration not to repeal the Veto Law, not to rescind the Act admitting *quoad sacra* ministers, nor to take off the sentence of deposition solemnly pronounced by the Church on the ministers of Strathbogie, but to hold that all this had been effectually done for them already by the civil judges—the Court of Session. If the Church had herself passed a rescissory Act there might have been some semblance of a claim to spiritual independence and freedom—she might have frankly avowed a change of opinion, and proceeded herself to undo what had been done.

But instead of this, she simply abdicated her own spiritual functions, and sat down at the feet of the Court of Session. There was no need to reverse her decisions—the Civil Courts had reversed them for her. Everything she had done was null, and had been null all along, because the civil judges so decreed. Without reserve, the Church seemed to have taken on herself the badge of Erastian servitude.

What made all this the more serious was the manifestly spiritual nature of the functions so surrendered. The case of the *quoad sacra* ministers affected the power of a pastor, in conjunction with his elders, to take the spiritual oversight of his flock. The Auchterarder and other cases affected the formation of the pastoral tie by the sacred act of ordination, while the cases of deposition came in contact with one of the most delicate and solemn acts in the whole range of the Church's sacred functions. If the Established Church gave over such matters into the hands of the Civil Courts, and allowed them THE RIGHT OF EXPUNGING her sentences, was it not plain that her whole spiritual independence was gone—she had yielded up the rule and discipline of Christ's house into the hands of secular judges.

It may well have been the consciousness of this which formed the real difficulty—found to be insuperable—in the way of answering the Protest. But it is a far more serious consideration for the members of the Establishment that the whole series of these precedents have been so homologated that they must be held to be now in full force, and to have settled the constitution of the Church on what is obviously an Erastian basis. In any case, it must be allowed that the members of the Free Church have had good reason to view such proceedings as affording a signal confirmation of the soundness of the course which they followed.

XIX. The Dwellings to which Ministers Retired.

One great trial which pressed immediately on outgoing ministers was the want of house accommodation—"a place," as one of them expresses it, "where to lay my own and so many other heads dear to me."

In the larger towns this was easy, though even there the change was often sufficiently marked. Dr. M'Farlan, of Greenock, had held a conspicuous place in the counsels of the Church ever after the debate on Pluralities in 1825. So early as December, 1839, he made, at a public meeting, the remarkable declaration: "It has pleased God, in His providence, to fill me, as far as stipend is concerned, a fuller cup than has fallen to any of my brethren; but this I say—and I say it advisedly, so help me God—holding the views I entertain on the subject, and regarding it as impossible without a sacrifice of conscience to submit to and acquiesce in that decree to which I have referred, I would rather cast that cup to the ground than I would taste it again, embittered, as it would be, if I were to yield, by the consciousness of having deserted what I believe to be my duty to God and my duty to the Church."

Accordingly, at the Disruption, he made the sacrifice, and his friends remarked that "he seemed as one relieved of a heavy burden, . . . cheerful and happy." He left the spacious house he had, and retired to a flat.* Those who had seen him in his former residence will remember how bright his presence made it, but all who had intercourse with him after the change will testify that a yet fairer sunshine seemed to rest on his new home, as if more than ever the joy of the Lord was his strength.

In country districts the trial through which ministers and

* Parker Mss., Rev. Dr. M'Farlan.

their families had to pass was often of a kind the full details of which will never be told on earth. The few examples now to be given may serve in some measure to show what was going on.

When Mr. Lumsden, of Barry, afterwards Principal Lumsden, of Aberdeen, removed from the manse, he had to retire to a labourer's cottage. Dr. M'Donald, of Ferintosh, the most venerated and influential minister in the North of Scotland, was not allowed to remain in the house to which he removed after leaving the manse, but was compelled, along with his family, to occupy a small, uncomfortable cottage in the neighbourhood.*

So long as health was not affected, such changes were accepted with all cheerfulness. Mr. Innes, of Deskford, states: "My experience in connection with the change has not been one of special trial, but of very great encouragement. I have felt the goodness of the Lord in a variety of respects, both to myself and to those in whom I am most deeply interested." He makes nothing of the fact which he afterwards states incidentally, that "the accommodation with which upon leaving the parish manse I and my family were glad to put up was, on account of its meanness, and the little respectability of our neighbours, made the subject of scorn and derision." Nor is he troubled by the fact that, in his old age, he had to walk three miles to the barn in which he preached, and three miles returning, sometimes having to do this twice on the Sabbath. He merely adds, "Through the Lord's great goodness, I have never, from the state of the weather, nor from the state of my health, been prevented from preaching on any one Sabbath, and never . . . have I been the worse for doing so, though I be now in my sixty-ninth year, and have a delicate frame and constitution."†

At Roslin, near Edinburgh, the circumstances were trying. After occupying for eleven years a very comfortable manse which was built for him, the minister "was obliged to rent two small cottages in the village of Roslin, having been decidedly refused the only houses in the vicinity which were suitable, though they were offered to be let to the general public. One of the two cottages, containing a single apartment, with a tiled

* Parker Mss., Rev. Dr. M'Donald. † Dis. Mss. xv. pp. 7, 8.

roof and an earthen floor, the minister occupied as a bedroom till he lost his health. At present [1846] that room is occupied by part of his family, who retire to it at night by going out of the door of the one cottage and into the door of the other, there being no internal communication between them. The floor of this room is covered by a piece of felt, obtained by purchase from a neighbouring paper-mill, and as one piece becomes rotten another piece is procured. Chairs and other articles used in the manse are hung round the walls of the room somewhat in the mode of a broker's warehouse, the two cottages being too little to contain the furniture in the usual way. As may well be conceived, the valuable furniture which was in the manse has been much deteriorated."*

So also in the case of Mr. Lamb, of Kirkmaiden. "Of all the incidents of 1843, none produced such a deep and general impression on the minds of men of all denominations in the district as the demission of Mr. Lamb. His family were delicate, and himself unfit for any but the quietest . . . duties, yet he left his manse for a comfortless dwelling with a loveable cheerfulness equalled only by the gentleness which had beautified his uncompromising firmness of principle during the whole course of the Ten Years' Conflict."†

In some cases the distance to which men were forced to remove involved much trial, and in others it is believed to have sent them to an untimely grave. "After leaving the manse, Mr. Aitken, of Dyke, was put to much inconvenience. . . . He was obliged to remove to the town of Forres, which was four miles distant, and here he continued for ten years. The visitation of his people and the performance of public duties were the occasion of much labour and travelling, both by day and by night."

"In 1852, a site was at last granted by Mr. Brodie, of Brodie, and a manse built in 1853, but the harassment and fatigue to which Mr. Aitken had long been subjected now began to tell on his constitution, and in 1855 his health broke down. . . . He was soon completely laid aside."‡

* Dis. Mss. xiv. p. 4. † Parker Mss., Pres. of Stranraer.

‡ *Ibid.* Pres. of Forres.

Mr. Roderick M'Leod, of Skye, writes, in 1867: "Perhaps Dr. Candlish may still remember his visit to Skye with the late lamented Dr. Makellar, when, after breakfasting with us and looking on our accommodation, he called Dr. Makellar to show him a curiosity, . . . the small dimensions of a room where six or seven children were packed together. . . . To the discomforts of these flittings, especially the first, I have often thought that the seeds of the fell disease that has made my company so desolate were mainly to be traced."*

The Rev. Thomas Davidson, of Kilmalie, Abertarff, had a still harder struggle. After leaving the manse, he had, down to May, 1844, two or three apartments in Annat House, but after that "the only accommodation he could obtain was a hut twelve feet square and six feet high, and so open that it was necessary by means of blankets and bedcovers to stop out the wind and rain. After this he got two small rooms in a Highland ferry-house, and when a friend came to visit him, he was obliged to part with one of these, and his wife and children slept on the floor. Even this accommodation he was compelled to surrender. . . . In March, 1847, he and his wife paid a visit to Glasgow, chiefly with the view of obtaining medical advice. Mrs. Davidson's case was one in which medical skill was unavailing. She died in Glasgow, on the 24th May, 'another victim,' says her husband, 'to the cruel oppression of the site-refusing proprietors of Scotland.'"†

In those parishes where the land was in the hands of a single hostile proprietor, the difficulties were much enhanced. In the Presbytery of Arbroath, the first Lord Panmure was well known as a site-refuser, and several of the ministers on his estates were driven to live at a distance. Dr. Wilson, now of Dundee, then at Carmylie, was obliged to reside about seven miles from the scene of his labours, "at an old farm-house, given," as he states, "rent free, through the generous kindness of Mr. David Anderson, Westhaven." For two years he had to walk those seven miles going and returning in the discharge of his duty.

So also Mr. Kirk, of Arbirlot—father of Dr. Kirk, surgeon to the expedition of Dr. Livingstone, and now Consul at Zanzibar—

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Skye. † *Ibid.* Pres. of Abertarff.

had to leave his parish and live in Arbroath. On the 31st December, 1846, he writes: "Another year has gone. Shall I live through that which succeeds? I feel myself carried forward to the first rank—exposed more, as it were, to the arrows of death. Three years and seven months have elapsed since I left the manse. I have walked to preach the Gospel on Sabbath during this period one thousand and fifty-six miles, week-day duty requiring much more. I have thus had, in three and a-half years, to walk upwards of two thousand miles to do ministerial work; yet I may set up my Ebenezer." The following is a specimen of the week-day work: "Spent the forenoon visiting sick; home; left at four to attend a meeting announced on Sabbath; the night damp and roads bad. After the people met, a storm of wind and rain came on. In a lull of the storm, set off at nine to return home. The lull was short. I had to brave the blast from the sea, cold and wet. The rain penetrated every part of my dress. The frost still bound the earth, which refused to admit a drop of rain. The night dark: came upon a large body of navvies; dashed on one of them, then on another. Reached home by eleven at night, in a state of weariness not well to be conceived." Other notices of excessive fatigue, and frequent sickness and fainting, follow; but the work goes on until, in February, 1847, he is laid up with severe illness—fainted. His reflections were at this time very solemn. After years of such exposure, he was able to leave Arbroath and return to the parish; but it was with broken health, which took the form of heart-complaint, under which he became gradually weaker, and ultimately sank in 1858.*

The account of the refusal at Shieldaig shows the feelings with which the Free Church was too frequently regarded. At the Disruption, says the Rev. Colin Mackenzie, "the whole population, with one exception, adhered to the Free Church and to my ministry. After my return from Edinburgh in June, 1843, I did not preach in the parish church, but did not, like most other ministers, quit the manse, just because there was no house of any kind to be got within the bounds of the parish, or within many miles beyond it, to which I could remove with

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Arbroath.

my aged mother and other two members of my family. . . . Meantime I made several applications to the proprietor of Shieldaig, . . . by letter, who always replied with a positive refusal, at the same time assuring me that the Free Church would get no footing on any part of his property. Before going south to the General Assembly, which met at Glasgow, I determined to make one more attempt to obtain a site by applying to him personally at his residence at Applecross House, hoping that, from the intimate and friendly terms on which he and I always were from boyhood, that on my own account, as a near relative, he might consent. On the contrary, he received me coldly, and expressed his wonder that I had taken upon me to call upon him, and expect that he would receive me, after acting so foolish a part as to bring myself and family to beggary at the very time when, as M.P. for the county, he had it in his power, and was determined to promote me to a better living; at the same time giving me to understand that he would not only not grant my request, but that I must quit the manse and remove myself from the parish of Shieldaig and from his estate, otherwise he would make my life bitter to me, as he was determined to interdict all his tenants from giving me so much as one apartment in any of their poor dwellings. Perceiving his hostile feeling towards me, I got up to get quarters for the night at a miserable inn not far from the mansion-house; but he objected, stating that I should have Highland hospitality for the night, but that I must be off after breakfast next morning, and he hoped that I should never again use the same liberty of calling upon him, since he could not now recognise me as a minister, nor yet as an old friend." *

But of all such cases the most conspicuous was that of the Duke of Sutherland. Mr. Mackenzie, of Farr, describes the circumstances: "However numerous the adherents, yet the people were poor, and in a state of dependence as tenants-at-will and cottars. Against them there was a powerful Duke, supported in his disapproval of the Free Church by his array of factors and agents, the minor heritors in the county, and all the wealthy sheep and corn-farmers, who acquired fortunes by occu-

* Dis. Mss. xlvi., Rev. C. Mackenzie, Shieldaig.

pying the lands from which the peasantry had been expelled. . . . I, in common with all the members of this Presbytery who adhered to the Convocation resolutions, had a trial before the Disruption as to our fidelity. It was stated, soon after the Convocation, by one of the Duke of Sutherland's officials, that should our resolutions be carried into effect, not an inch of ground would be given within the bounds of our Presbytery whereon to build a church and manse. . . . At the hour of the Disruption, perhaps in no county in Scotland was there a darker cloud over the prospects of the Free Church." *

It is painful to tell how these forebodings of trial were realised. The account of the two Mackenzies, of Tongue—father and son—attracted much notice. The family had occupied the manse, a very beautiful residence, for nearly a hundred years. At the age of seventy-two the elder Mr. Mackenzie, afflicted with asthma, had to leave his house and send his family forty miles away to Thurso, because the only accommodation he could get for himself and his son (his assistant and successor) was a room and bed-closet in a mean cottage, for which the rent was four shillings a-week. In these circumstances the son was attacked by fever, and both died—the father on the 30th of June, and the son on the 26th July, 1845. During that illness, Dr. Guthrie, of Edinburgh had gone to see them, and afterwards described his visit in an address to the General Assembly.

"I fancy most of the members of this House are aware that I had the pain—the exquisite pain—and I must at the same time say, the very high privilege, of seeing that noble father and his no less noble son witnessing, under the most affecting circum stances, a good and blessed confession. I shall never forget to my dying day the scene I witnessed at the manse at Tongue; or rather—I forget myself—in a mean, at least a humble cottage, to which that father and son had retired, parting with family, rather than part with their flock. I say, I will never forget this. I was never so unmanned by any sight I ever saw, if I may call it being unmanned, for I am not ashamed of being affected by such a sight. I shall not venture to describe what I saw. I shall only say, in the words of Scripture,

* Dis. Mss. xx. pp. 5, 12.

that they were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided. I rise to bear my humble testimony to the worth of these men, I should rather say, to the worth of these martyrs for those great principles for which we abandoned our earthly all. They lay on their dying beds in peace. Never shall I forget the sight of that venerable old man, a man who would have adorned any church, who would have adorned any society. Never shall I forget seeing him in his mean cottage, nature exhausted, buried in the sleep he had not tasted the livelong night, his venerable locks streaming over the chair where he was sitting asleep, for in the bed he could not sleep. I went up to him and intended to awake him, but thought it cruelty to do so. I passed him over and over again in the room, and still he slept on, and after seeing his son lying in an adjoining closet on a fever-bed—a son that had never closed his eyes all the night long either, for his father's groans were like daggers in his heart—I left the house, and the last words I heard that son say on this earth were: 'Mr. Guthrie, this is hard enough, but I thank God I do not lie here a renegade. My father's conscience and mine are at peace.' Yes, sir, they are now at peace, both of them. They are gone to the place where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. I believe that the memory of these two men will live fresh in the minds of the people of the parish of Tongue for generations yet to come." *

Another of these sufferers was Mr. Baird, of Cockburnspath. "I went out last winter," says Dr. Guthrie, "and found him in a mean cottage, consisting of two rooms—a but and a ben—with a cellar-like closet below, and a garret above. Night came on, and I asked where I was to sleep. He showed me a closet. The walls were damp — no fire could be put in it. I looked horrified at the place, but there was no better. 'Now,' said I, 'Mr. Baird, where are you to sleep?' 'Come,' said he, 'and I will show you.' So he climbed a sort of trap-stair, and got up to the garret, and there was the minister's study, with a chair, a table, and a flock-bed. A few inches above were the slates of the roof, without any covering, and as white with hoar-

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Tongue.

frost within as they were white with snow without. When he came down the next morning, after a sleepless night, I asked him how he had been, and he told me that he had never closed an eye from the cold. His very breath on the blankets was frozen as hard as the ice outside. I say that man lies in a martyr's grave." *

Hardly less painful was the case of Mr. M'Vean, of Iona, who was exposed to many hardships after leaving the manse. First he crossed over to the Mull coast, to an old house, which, with the exception of one unoccupied room, had been used only as a granary for many years. It proved so open to wind and cold, that all winter there was illness in his family, and after the death of one of his children he was driven to seek shelter elsewhere. The schoolmaster in Iona let him his house, but was so severely handled by his Presbytery (Established Church) for the countenance shown to the Free Church minister, that he was obliged to give Mr. M'Vean notice to quit. Rather than remove to Tobermory, a distance of forty-five miles, Mr. M'Vean took refuge in a small and most uncomfortable hut. It was there he was found by the well-known Dr. Merle D'Aubigné, who could not refrain from tears at the sight. "When entering," he says in a letter to Dr. Chalmers, "one of the miserable huts on the shore, I heard that there, almost exposed to the inclemency of the weather, the minister and his family had taken refuge. . . . Then I better understood the Free Church. I better understood the devotion and the sacrifice of so many of your friends." †

These trials were not rendered less difficult to bear when one took into account the obvious design which the opponents had in view. In returning from the fever-stricken cottage at Tongue, Dr. Guthrie says, "I confess I felt my corruption rising." But afterwards, he adds, "The object was to crush the minister—not for the sake of injuring him—God forbid that I should say that—but to compel him to leave the district, that thus the flock of the Free Church might be scattered." It was the old policy of the persecuting Stuarts revived, and adapted to modern circumstances.

* Memoir of Dr. Guthrie, ii. p. 89. † Parker Mss., Rev. Mr. M'Vean.

Were ministers, then, to be driven from the post where God had set them?

An old military officer, Charles Maitland Christie, Esq. of Durie, once said, in the General Assembly: "You are aware, Moderator, that when two hostile armies come into the vicinity of each other, it is not unusual to place pickets of defence in front of the main body. . . . I, sir, have had the honour of being placed in such a picket, and when I was told by my commanding officer to consider it not as a picket of alarm, but as a picket of defence, I felt that if the enemy should advance upon that picket of the line, it would be my duty to fight there and to die there." * It was with something of this feeling that the men of 1843 prepared to face the hardships of the positions in which God had placed them. How much they were prepared to endure rather than flinch may be seen from the above examples, but one more instance—painful enough in some of its details—may be given, to show how hard the struggle sometimes became.

Mr. Campbell, the minister of Berriedale, in Caithness, relates his experience: "We suffered much hardship as a congregation. We could not get sites for our church and manse for eleven years. . . . The teacher and myself lived in a most miserable place. The people would not dare to receive us into their houses. The teacher, therefore, put a temporary roof upon the ruin of an old cottage. In that miserable place we lived for seven years. . . . If there were heavy rain during the night, there was a pool of water before my bed to welcome my rising in the morning. If there was high wind, the ashes were blown up in my face. The wind had free course under the foundation, the house having been built upon a heap of stones. It was so damp and cold that I had to wear my greatcoat at the fireside. I felt, by degrees, that my life was in danger. My feet began to swell much from the dampness of the place. . . . I walked about a great deal, to prevent my getting worse, if possible. One night I was awakened from sleep by a tremendous noise on the roof of the house, very like the noise of people in danger of shipwreck on the sea-shore. There was a great storm of wind,

* Ten Years' Conflict, vol. ii. p. 175.

which was carrying away the roof. The noise was made by men, who came together to keep the roof on the house, if possible. They raised their voices to the highest pitch, the wind was so high that they could not otherwise hear each other. But, in spite of all their exertions, the roof was carried away, and the curtains of my bed had enough to do to withstand the storm. They have been more than once, upon other occasions, flapping about me like the sails of a ship in a storm.

"Feeling my life thus exposed to danger, I set about building a school-house and teacher's dwelling-house—the teacher's house first. We entered the teacher's house before it was plastered. We had to remove from one room to another till it was finished. It was very damp and uncomfortable, but better than the place we were in."

These trials passed away. Twelve years after the Disruption saw the congregation in a new church and the minister in a comfortable manse. Though he had been thus successful after a fight so hard, he shows little disposition to take credit either for his trials or his success. "We are apt," he says, "to complain of our trials and losses, but what are they in comparison with those of the first preachers of the Gospel? We have suffered much, yet it is not impossible that some may have suffered as much for His sake, and have forsaken His service at last. We have need of praying, like David, 'Lord, search me, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts.' We have need of the operation of the Holy Spirit to number us among the blessed." *

It is interesting to notice how calmly many of the sufferers were prepared to make the best of the circumstances in which they were placed. One of the most beautiful manses in the south of Scotland was that at Ruthwell, formerly referred to. The garden and all the grounds round the house and church had been laid out in exquisite taste, showing not a few objects of singular interest. At one point stood the far-famed Runic cross, which Dr. Duncan had restored and made known to archæologists, while at another there had been built into the walls of a garden-house the sandstone slabs from Corncockle

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Caithness.

Moor, showing those footprints which, at their first discovery, had startled the geological world. How cheerfully all this was left by the old minister, we have already seen. At first the difficulties in the way of obtaining accommodation had been great. "At last the heart of an old neighbour was inclined to offer shelter to her old minister; and though no Free Churchwoman herself, Miss Dickson packed herself in one end of her cottage, and allowed us to pay a rent for the other; which we did thankfully, though the accommodation was inconvenient for both parties." After a time this arrangement had to terminate. "We used to console each other by saying that our Father knew we could not in our climate live under a hedge. We felt much at a loss, and having looked all around in vain for help, we committed it to Him, and waited for direction. We had promised to remove on the 1st of May. It wanted four days of the time, and was Saturday night. Dr. Duncan was called to hear the will of an old lady read, whose death produced some changes. At eight o'clock he came in and said, 'We are to have a house to cover us. W. B. is to remove into the large house, and on Tuesday, at noon, we may begin to clean his cottage.' I do not stop to say that it is damp, very smoky, and part of it unceiled. There were so many people glad for us, and we ourselves were so filled with thankfulness, that we seemed to have found a palace. We saw that we had been left to the last moment, that we might discern more clearly the hand that provided. It seemed far more the people's concern than our first removal. They came and cleaned and scrubbed, whitewashing the very outside of the cottage. Then they carried furniture, and by mid-day on the 1st May, we had entered our new resting-place. No one of all who helped us on that occasion would receive anything for their labour. Indeed, we felt that this little event of the cottage drew into exercise more faith on our part and more love on the people's than all that had preceded it. The only pang in it was the parting word of those who had helped us with such a free heart—'Now, we hope there will be no more heard of removing to Edinburgh.' A man who had a field behind our house, without saying anything about it, opened his hedge and put in

a gate, so that we could walk in a very pleasant place, and often escaped from the smoke of the house to the green field, with its little plots of wild roses and honeysuckles; and there, with our books, we were as happy as we could have been in the garden, whose every graceful nook was so endeared to us."*

The reader may feel some interest in comparing this narrative of Mrs. Duncan with the account of another observer: "Dr. Henry Duncan, the originator of savings banks, left a manse which his taste during forty years had made a paradise. He took up his abode in a labourer's cottage on the side of the turnpike road from Dumfries to Carlisle. It contained a room, a kitchen, and a bed-closet. Behind it lay a great old quarry, with unsightly rubbish mounds, and deep pools of water. I saw the fine old gentleman in his roadside cottage about the year 1846. He entertained his company, a few ministers in the neighbourhood, with the polished courtesy of the old school. Dinner over, he said, 'Will you go into the drawing-room, gentlemen?' His guests, puzzled where the drawing-room could be, rose and followed him. Opening the back door of the cottage, 'My drawing-room is the great drawing-room of Nature,' he said. We stepped out, and there was the deserted quarry, its rubbish mounds all planted with spruce and larch; winding paths led among them; a rustic bridge made by his own hands spanning a space between two pools, and the whole huge deformity transformed into beauty."† He said to his daughter and her husband, who had come to visit him—Mr. Dodds, of Belhaven: "They talk of sacrifices; I never can feel that I have made any. I never was more happy. I have all that my necessities require. The only thing that would have made me unhappy would have been to act contrary to conscience."

There is yet another of these painful cases which it would be improper to omit, that of the Rev. Duncan M'Gillivray, of Lairg, a venerable minister, who was eighty years of age at the Disruption. The only house in the parish to which he could retire was the cottage of a widowed daughter, the use of which

* Dis. Mss. xvi. pp. 9, 10.

† Life of Dr. Cunningham, p. 192. Rev. James Mackenzie.

had been given her by the Duke of Sutherland. The week before Mr. M'Gillivray left the manse, Mr. Gunn, the factor, called for Mrs. Henderson, and gave her significant hints as to the inexpediency of her father's going to the cottage. At last she put the question: "Do you mean, Mr. Gunn, that I am not to admit my own father into my house when he has no other place to go to?" His answer was: "Just that, Mrs. Henderson;" and her reply was, that so long as she was there her father should share her cottage. Soon after he came to be her guest, Mr. Taylor, the Duke's law-agent, called for him, and said twice and very significantly, "Mr. M'Gillivray, I wish you to know that Mr. Gunn has acquainted me that you have come to reside here without his permission." Convinced that the Duke's agents had resolved to get rid of them, and dreading the idea of being ejected in winter, both father and daughter left,* the father going to reside with his sons—first at Dairsie, and afterwards at Mains. But after all this, he would allow no one to make much of his trials. "I have no difficulty whatever," he said, "in the matter; I see clearly that Christ's glory demands the sacrifice." He has been known to leave the room when severe remarks were made in his hearing against the Duke of Sutherland. Few things were more touching than the prayers which he continued to offer to the last on behalf of that nobleman, and there is reason to believe that in his case "the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man" was not offered in vain. It is due to the Duke of Sutherland to say that, after a time, his feeling changed, and sites were granted all over his property.

* For fuller details see *Witness*, 25th October, 1843.

XX. The Advancement of Religion.

It is impossible to close the first part of these annals without referring to the most important of all subjects in connection with the Church—the advancement of vital religion in the land. We have seen what reason there is to believe that the revival of religion prepared the way for the Disruption; but one is naturally led to ask whether the cause did not suffer when the controversy fairly broke out. For ten years and more, all over Scotland, there was contention everywhere. Families were divided, children at school took sides, bitter pamphlets were poured forth from the press, the whole frame-work of society was dislocated, and high above the turmoil were heard the voices of Scotland's most venerated ministers, engaged in keen debate. In such an atmosphere as this would not the cause of vital godliness decay, and the Christian graces themselves languish and wither? So men often asked reproachfully during the progress of the conflict, but the result proved far otherwise.

That the alloy of human infirmity mingled in the struggle none were so ready to confess as the controversialists themselves, but a great responsibility had been put into their hands, and, amidst difficulties and imperfections, they must strive faithfully to uphold the cause of Christ. Just in proportion as the consciousness of this came home to their minds, the controversy was safe. "The ecclesiastical turmoil," as Dr. Bonar expresses it, "seemed to elevate, not to depress; to spiritualise, not to secularise."

This is not the place to discuss the philosophy of such a subject, but experience everywhere shows that the Church has

far more to dread from the quiescent indifference of peaceful worldly times than from the shock of controversy quickening the intellectual activities of men. It is a remarkable fact that the most deplorable division which ever rent our Presbyterianism was coincident with the time—from 1650 to 1660—when the Church had the firmest hold on all classes of the people, and when the religion and morality of the country rose to a far higher level than ever was attained before or since. A contemporary historian states: "I verily believe there were more souls converted to Christ in that short period of time than in any season since the Reformation, though of triple its duration. Nor were there ever greater purity and plenty of the means of grace. . . . I have lived many years in a parish where I never heard an oath, and you might have ridden many miles before you heard any. Also you could not, for a great part of the country, have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped. . . . Nobody complained more of our Church government than our taverners, whose ordinary lamentation was, their trade was broke, people were become so sober." *

Such were the results wrought out among the Scottish people by our Church at a time when, from the highest nobleman to the humblest peasant, she had the whole community within her pale. A lamentable controversy, indeed, raged within her borders, but the Gospel did its blessed work none the less, and with this outstanding fact in our Church's history, we need feel no surprise if in connection with the ten years' conflict there were tokens of success in the spiritual field, for which our Church had reason to give thanks.

There was one thing, at least, on account of which all the friends of religion might well be grateful: the ministers of the Convocation had stood true to their pledges in the day of trial. The world had ridiculed the bare idea of 400 of their number laying down their livings for conscience' sake. A triumph for the cause of irreligion was confidently expected by the more careless.

* Kirkton's History, pp. 63, 64. Attempts have been made to cast doubt on these statements by some who had little sympathy with Kirkton's religious views. For a complete vindication of his accuracy the reader may refer to a pamphlet by the Rev. Dr. Brown, of Langton. Letter to Dr. Chalmers, &c., 1833.

After all the loud professions of the Evangelical party, the love of stipend was expected to prevail, pledges would be cast aside, some back-door would be found, and when men were seen coming down from the high ground they had so boldly taken, the world was prepared with its scornful laugh to greet the ignominious retreat. One of the English judges, on being told by a Scottish M.P. that the holder of the richest benefice in Scotland had pledged himself to resign it, replied, with a sneer, "I will believe it when I see it." At Perth, "many of the worldly and ungodly in the town and neighbourhood were eagerly watching the event, and had, it is understood, considerable bets depending on the conduct of particular ministers. When, contrary to their expectations, the Disruption actually took place on such an extensive scale, they seemed completely taken by surprise." * The system of bets on the result is said to have been common in the clubs of Edinburgh and elsewhere, and the surprise felt at Perth was very generally shared in, over the country. When the news of the Disruption day reached Glasgow, and was announced on the Exchange, the usual busy hum of voices suddenly ceased, and silence fell on the assembled merchants. For a brief moment the reality of Christian principle seemed suddenly to reveal itself even to men of the world. As Mr. Lewis says of Dundee, "Even those most opposed to us respected our courage and constancy." It was religion itself that had been put on trial in the persons of its most zealous professing friends, and if all the truth could be told as to the kind of talk that had gone on in those clubs and elsewhere among worldly circles, it would be seen how great a danger had been escaped from.

"If we had failed in the day of trial," says Mr. Thomson, of Muckhart, "and become traitors and renegades, infidelity would, ere long, have walked triumphantly through the length and breadth of the land." Mr. Mather, of Stanley, tells of one of those ministers who had turned back in the day of trial, and who, in the hearing of an elder of the United Secession, was railing at the Free Church, when he received the reply: "Mr. ——, had all the non-intrusion ministers acted as you have

* Dis. Mss. iv. p. 8.

done, a greater injury would have been done to the interests of religion and morality than could have been repaired by a hundred years' preaching." * All the friends of our common faith in all the churches might well rejoice that the sacrifice which had been laid on the altar of Christian principle had at least taken away this ground for reproach. "There is something," says Dr. Guthrie, "more eloquent than speech. I am bold to say that Hall, Foster, or Chalmers never preached a sermon so impressive or sublime as the humblest minister of our Church did on the 18th of May, when he gave up his living to retain his principles, and joined the crowd which, bursting from the doors of St. Andrew's Church, with Chalmers at its head, marched out, file by file, in steady ranks, giving God's people reason to weep tears, not of grief, but of joy." †

But not only had a great danger been escaped from; a new impulse had been given to the spiritual work of the Church—the grand object for which she exists on earth.

One signal proof of this was the spirit of prayer which showed itself all through the conflict. Days were again and again set apart by the Church in which her people were invited to public and private prayer. In November, 1842, for example, an earnest appeal was widely circulated, calling all the friends of the Church to "the duty of pouring out their hearts to God in frequent and fervent prayers, in the view of the approaching Convocation. . . . Let those occupying a private station in the Church bear in mind that as Aaron and Hur of old bore up the hands of Moses while Israel was contending with Amalek, and as the people in the wilderness brought to the service of the tabernacle according to their several abilities, . . . so those in the most retired and private spheres may, by prayer, render just as real and essential a service to this assembly of ministers as those who shall be called to take the most active share in its proceedings."

In the Disruption Mss. there are traces of how these appeals were responded to. "Looking back as far as 1839, I recollect that, during the sitting of the General Assembly that year, there was a more than ordinary concern manifest in all our

* Dis. Mss. v. p. 6. † Life, vol. ii. p. 59.

public and private religious exercises [at Farr] for the Divine blessing and presence on and with the ministers and elders of our Church. This concern was increasing during the years following." *

"A little before my leaving to attend the Convocation, I was much impressed with an ejaculatory prayer of an old woman, who had been long bedrid, whom I was visiting [in Gartly]. I had been telling her where and for what purpose I was going. The poor woman raised herself as well as she could in her bed, and prayed fervently that the Lord would be with the ministers who were to assemble, and enable them to stand together and be faithful to Jesus, the Church's only Head and King." †

At Tobermory, in the Island of Mull, the parish had been under "a Moderate ministry, and there were few among the people who truly feared God. One of the brightest lights of the place was an old man, a weaver, named John M'Innes. He was a man of faith and prayer. . . . Previous to and about the time of the Disruption, he was known often to spend most of the night in prayer—literally wrestling till the breaking of the day, that the Lord would give grace to His witnesses to be faithful in the day of trial. Some time before, he one night came out of his closet with his face shining with joy. He said he firmly believed that at no distant time the Lord was going to send the Gospel to the poor Isle of Mull. . . . When the Disruption took place, the people seemed instinctively to turn to M'Innes's house, round which, the first Sabbath, five hundred assembled for admission. Though the Church which I saw is not yet opened, the number of adherents is about 1000. . . . The minister is Mr. M'Lean, in the settlement of whom in the place old John M'Innes's prediction has been eminently fulfilled." ‡

"I think about this time [after the Convocation] many of my people [at Errol] as well as myself experienced an increased spirit of seriousness and prayer. One of the first things that impressed them very deeply in this way was the circumstance that one of my co-presbyters, while assisting at the communion, which took place about three weeks after the Convocation, dwelt very

* Dis. Mss. xx. p. 1. † *Ibid.* xvii. p. 7.

‡ Mss. by W. Dickson, Esq., of notes taken on the spot.

largely in prayer on the trial that was coming on the minister and people, and represented that as likely to be the last time they would meet together in that place for the celebration of that solemnity. Many, as well as the parties immediately concerned, were affected by the way in which that brother prayed for sustaining faith to the writer and his partner in life." *

"My soul often goes out at the throne of grace on behalf of Larbert and Dunipace. May the Disruption be more blessed to them than days of peace!" †

These extracts may serve to indicate the spirit of prayerfulness which was spreading throughout the congregations and among the ministers.

Another circumstance no less deserving of notice was the earnest preaching of the Gospel, and the way in which ministers were pressing home its invitations. Amid the heat and fervour of controversy men seemed to grow more urgent, and the very events which were transpiring were dwelt on as giving impressiveness to the appeal. We see this in the address written by Dr. James Buchanan, and circulated by the Convocation among the people of Scotland, in which, after arguing the public questions at issue, they urge men solemnly to consider the great question of personal salvation. "Are there none among you who have often been solemnly warned to flee from the wrath to come, and affectionately invited to close with Christ, who are still living without Christ and without hope in the world? Are there none who, while the throne of grace has been at all times accessible, have habitually neglected secret prayer? Are there none of your houses in which there is no domestic altar? . . . A season of trial has often been a time of reviving from the presence of the Lord; and it is our hearts' desire and prayer for you that, now when the clouds are gathering, and a storm seems to be at hand, the careless may be awakened to serious thought, and may be found safe in the ark when the deluge comes, and that the faithful may be strengthened to endure, as seeing Him who is invisible. . . . In contending for Christ's crown as the King of saints, and your right to serve Him as Master in His own house, according to the rule of His Word, see that you obey Christ as

* Dis. Mss. xi. p. 3. † Life of M'Cheyne, p. 140.

your Lord, and walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called."

In a similar spirit, ministers in their own parishes availed themselves of the opportunity, and we give two examples to show how this was done. "It is pre-eminently necessary," said Dr. John Bonar, of Larbert, "that every man should look to his own saving interest in Christ. Have we such an interest in Him? Have we anything in Christ really possessed which would counterbalance the loss of the earthly things which are perilled? Have we anything in religion for the sake of which it would be wise to suffer the loss of all earthly things? He would be a fool to throw away all the advantages of this life if he had nothing after all in the life to come; but he would be infinitely worse than a fool who would, for the sake of the world, sell his soul or betray his Saviour. See to it, then, that you gain the soul and hold the Saviour. 'I bless God,' said James Guthrie, when under sentence of death for maintaining the Headship of Christ, 'I die not as a fool dieth. I know what I die for, and I know it is worth dying for.' See that ye know what ye suffer for, and how much it is worth suffering for."*

"And now, my dear friends, I cannot close without remembering that God appears to be preparing, by the solemn movements of His providence, for a process of sternest sifting, when those of you who are Christians by mere profession will probably be separated from those who are Christians in deed and in truth. . . Let me, therefore, urge upon you all the vast and infinite importance of closing, in right earnest, with the overtures of the Gospel, and entering with the Divine Redeemer into a covenant never to be forgotten. If you rest satisfied with anything short of this, it is not for a moment to be supposed that you can stand in the day of visitation and trial." †

If the approach of the Disruption, however, was viewed in this light, the change, when it actually came, brought with it a new and far more serious responsibility, for not only were

* Reasons for Religious People, &c., pp. 5, 6.

† Rev. Mr. Wallace, of Hawick, *Witness*, 28th December, 1842.

parishes and whole districts, formerly closed, laid open to the preaching of the Gospel, but the outgoing ministers, to an extent never before equalled, had the ear of the people, who were eager and longing to hear the Gospel from their lips. Of the solemn responsibility arising out of this, Dr. Candlish reminded the first Assembly: "I trust we have now made up our minds *to look only to the great prospects before us, and have dismissed all bitterness and wrath, so that in all that has occurred, we now recognise, not the instrumentality of man, but the doing of the Lord.* . . . We have cause to wonder at this condescension of the Lord, in having counted us worthy to bear such a testimony before Christendom. But let us now address ourselves to the work on hand. . . . A very weighty responsibility rests on us. We have been instrumental throughout all the land in exciting a thirst for the preaching of the Gospel, and if now we shall slack our exertions, and fold our hands, and grow weary, unquestionably we shall incur the heavy responsibility of leaving the fields which are now white unto the harvest unreaped and ungathered. . . . What remaineth but to gird up the loins of our mind, to watch with prayer, labouring to win souls unto Christ, and *coveting nothing as a recompense for all the sacrifices we have been enabled to make, but that ours may be the glorious reward of those who have turned many to righteousness.*"*

Before giving examples to show how this work was carried out, there is one circumstance which must be borne in mind, if one would understand the situation—viz., the line of distinction which separated between the Establishment and the Free Church. Nothing connected with the movement was more obvious than that, as a general rule, the more earnest and spiritually-minded among both ministers and people had gone to form the Free Church. The consciousness of this, as may be seen from certain of their own statements recently published, weighed heavily on the more far-seeing friends of the Establishment. It was, however, only what might have been expected in the very nature of things. Not only did it require a certain degree of earnestness for a man to cast in his lot with those who were preparing to share the sacrifices, and provide for the support of the outgoing

* *Witness*, 23rd May, 1843.

ministers, but it could hardly be that the more careless members of the Church could feel any real interest in the Headship of Christ, or in His crown-rights as Redeemer. That not a few of those who adhered to the Establishment did so from conscientious feelings is true, but the mass of those men whose religion was a mere form naturally remained where they got all they cared for without trouble or sacrifice. Some of the anecdotes which obtained currency in the country show what the popular impression on the subject was. At Carmylie, "in stormy weather, during the winter of 1844-45, the congregation had to leave their tent and worship in the barn of Mr. Kydd, farmer at Mains of Carmylie. One stormy Sabbath, when the congregation were repairing as usual to the barn, the congregation of the Establishment were also on their way to the parish church. Some of the members of the different congregations, accordingly, met and crossed each other. A member of the Established Church thus accosted an elder of the Free Church, 'Well, John, you are on the way to the barn to get a thrashing,' alluding to the reputed severity of the minister's preaching. 'Na, na,' said John, 'the thrashing is ower, and we're now at the dichtin' (winnowing). D'ye not see the chaff blowing down yonder?' pointing to the Established Church."* In this case the love of repartee had something to do with the strength of the statement, but similar views meet us in the deliberately expressed opinions of ministers, speaking from their own experience. "There were exceptions, certainly," says Dr. Foote, of Aberdeen, "some going with us who had not given any evidence of vital religion, and some remaining behind, of whom better things might have been expected; but the division, in the main, turned out just as I looked for."†

"I have always had reason to conclude that those who came out along with me were, with very few exceptions, the most pious and godly of the parish."‡

"My expectation was, that, if the Disruption should take place, a very considerable part of my congregation would remain faithful. There was much prayer among them, both social

* Parker Mss., Rev. W. Wilson, Pres. of Arbroath.
† Dis. Mss, xxiv. ‡ *Ibid.* xii. Cleish.

and otherwise, before and during the memorable Assembly. . . . The praying part of them have favourably realised my expectations." *

The division which thus took place was, in many respects, painful, yet it drew the more devoted followers of Christ closer to each other, and inasmuch as the communion of saints is one of the means of grace, it brought with it spiritual advantages which both ministers and people were not slow to acknowledge. Mr. Thomson, of Muckhart, tells how, in consequence of the Disruption, "a very great and decided change had taken place in the whole aspect of the congregation. . . . There is much more of cordial and kindly interest in each other. I have got much better acquainted with them than I did for the ten preceding years. I have been led, from greater frankness in intercourse with them, to believe there are more of God's people among them than I at first anticipated."†

It was in the pastoral work itself that the results were most visible in the increasing earnestness both of preachers and hearers, the greater purity of communion, and the new life that was thrown into all departments of Christian work. The following extracts, referring to different districts of the country, will show how widely the impulse was felt.

"I am conscious," says Dr. Lorimer [Glasgow], "speaking generally, of more liberty and freedom, both in prayer and preaching. . . . There is more lively attention, too, on the part of the people to the Word preached. More than one has assured me that my entire services come home with much more power to the heart and conscience than they once did. From time to time I hear of cases of spiritual good. Among the believing members of my flock there is more activity and prayer, and greater zeal for the good of others. This is particularly apparent among the youth of both sexes, who assemble in prayer meetings, and distribute tracts, and teach in Sabbath schools."‡

"I have no hesitation in stating that the Disruption has had a most beneficial effect on the minds of many of my flock, and especially among the young. . . . A considerable majority of this class adhere to the Free Church, and, I am happy to say,

* Dis. Mss. xv. † *Ibid.* xxviii. p. 8. ‡ *Ibid.* i. p. 8.

now manifest a much livelier interest in spiritual things than before. The institution of a very interesting meeting, for religious improvement and prayer, on the morning of the Lord's day, has been the result. There is, likewise, a greater readiness displayed by qualified persons to act as Sabbath-school teachers —a circumstance which gives me particular delight. Another pleasing fruit of the separation has been a spirit of sincere cordiality among my people as a congregation, a new bond of mutual attachment has been created, which promises to be productive of lasting good."

"There has been great and spiritual concern manifested [at Ardoch], and much greater solemnity in hearing the Gospel than before the Disruption, especially on sacramental occasions, when the sufferings of our Lord brought nigh made His people forget their own. . . . There has also been exhibited much greater union of heart among the members of the congregation."*

"The cause of vital godliness has been promoted by the Disruption [Lesmahagow]. My observation leads me to think that, both before and since that event, more attention has been paid to the preaching of the Gospel from Sabbath to Sabbath, and also to the duties of secret and family religion. Generally speaking, a deeper interest is felt in spiritual subjects; but, alas, it is still with us the day of small things. . . . Oh! for a larger outpouring of the Spirit of God to water the weary wilderness."†

"At Humbie, I found my facilities for preaching the Gospel and doing good among the people increased after the Disruption. I myself felt more free both to speak and to act, and my people were more willing and attentive. Our mutual attachment was also increased by our mutual trials."‡

At Arbirlot, Mr. Kirk preached in the barn, which became his church; "but the crowd was often so great that they had to remove to the field, which was no great hardship, the Sabbaths being fine that summer; and the warm devotion of the hearers, and the deep impression made, caused thankfulness and joy. Often did the people speak of the good they got at that time; several have dated their new birth from that period." §

* Parker Mss., Kintore, p. 4.
† Dis. Mss. xxxi. p. 14.
‡ *Ibid.* xxxiii. p. 8.
§ Parker Mss., Pres. of Arbroath.

"The people in general [Muckhart] seem to listen to the Word with much more earnestness. Considerable emotion is from time to time manifested. They seem much more alive to the realities and importance of religion. . . . Some, apparently, have been awakened for the first time, and more quickening and life imparted to those previously renewed."*

"Since the Disruption the most favourable circumstances in our congregation [Collace] have been—the visiting of their districts by the elders in a spiritual manner, and the much purer exercise of discipline. . . . Three months after the Disruption one of the most intelligent, but most careless, lads in the place, but not very friendly to us, was the subject of so decided a change as to be remarked in the whole neighbourhood. He soon found joy and peace in believing, and has proved one of our steadiest and most efficient helps in the deaconship."†

Dr. Lorimer states that "many of the young people who applied for admission to the Lord's table at Bothwell, in the summer of 1844, when I resided there for a short time, and took ecclesiastical charge, . . . attributed their first serious thoughts of religion to that great event [the Disruption], and its immediate consequent widespread and warm gospel preaching."‡

At Luss, in Dumbartonshire, it is said that, "since the Disruption there have been some awakenings. Great outward changes have taken place on some who were careless, and I have reason to believe that several have been converted. . . . There are inquirers after truth in the congregation who seem to have been brought into a state of concern since the Disruption, and who confess that they spent sleepless nights thinking over it. In reference to this matter, I quote again from Lady Colquhoun: 'A great change since the event is manifest in the spiritual concern of many, and the conversion of some. The appearance of the congregation is also most encouraging, from the apparent impression under the Word preached, frequently from a solemn silence.'"§

Of the work in the Presbytery of Ayr, Mr. Grant gives

* Dis. Mss. xxviii.
† *Ibid.* xxi. p. 2.
‡ *Ibid.* i. p. 9.
§ *Ibid.* xxx. p. 6.

an interesting account:—"The months that followed [the Disruption] were busy months. The eleven who came out undertook to supply ordinances in thirty-three charges. It was no easy task. I find that I preached on an average twenty times a-month. My brethren were equally busy. But two things combined to make it very pleasant work. First, there was little rain—Sabbath seemed invariably to be calm and sunshiny; so that our meeting in the open air was really more pleasant than it would have been in a crowded church. Secondly, the earnestness with which the people listened was most remarkable. I have now lived to see the revival of 1859 and the religious movement of 1874. I cannot, and therefore do not, speak of other localities; but I may safely say that in Ayr the earnestness was deeper and the fruit more abundant in the summer and autumn of 1843 than during any part of my ministry. It was not merely nor mainly a time of ecclesiastical controversy about Church government, but especially a ime of deep, earnest, and widespread spiritual awakening. As I gazed on the upturned countenances of the assembled people, they always seemed to me to say, 'Sir, we would see Jesus.'"

Mr. Taylor, of Flisk, enumerates the spiritual benefits arising from the change in his neighbourhood: "First, we got free from the fellowship of many in the ministry with whom we had little sympathy. . . . Secondly, we saw that God was owning the testimony that was borne to the mediatorial glory of His Son in the increased earnestness of those who waited on our ministry, and in bringing out the distinction which it is ever salutary to maintain betwixt the Church and the world. Thirdly, we felt, what has since been a source of constant satisfaction, that we did not provoke Christ to blast our ministry by a deliberate disowning of Him in His kingly office. Probably there was no one feeling which more effectually constrained me to join in the Disruption movement than just the fear that Christ would refuse to remember me among His servants should I have followed any other course. And what I have since seen, both in the personal and ministerial history of many who apostatised from the truth and their own professions, has shown me that the fear was well founded."

In regard to the actual results in his own experience, Mr. Taylor goes on to say: "My labours lay among the farmers, and ploughmen, and villagers. Amongst these God's saving grace was effectually put forth in the Disruption year, and in some of the years which immediately followed. It is true that things did not turn out as I expected and prayed for. My hope was that there would be some marked and outwardly recognisable work of grace, some visible acknowledgment from God of the testimony which, as a Church, we were endeavouring to bear to His glory. Now it was not so; and, doubtless, this expectation was my infirmity. The great scriptural principle was literally fulfilled—the kingdom of God cometh not with observation. There was a measure of hearty interest among the people, and hopefulness in connection with ordinances, which was encouraging. But it was years afterwards before I knew of cases of conversion which had really taken place at that time.

"I remember well the first intimation I got. A poor ploughman, of simple mind and manner, called for his certificate. He had been with us at the Disruption, and had worshipped with us in the barn. He was affected at parting, and he said, with much feeling, 'Sir, the Word gripped me in the barn.' One and another of the most decided of the people have spoken to that as the time when they were affected by spiritual things as they had never been before."*

What Mr. Taylor had longed to see in Fife—a marked revival of religion—took place in the Island of Skye, simultaneously with the Disruption. It was carefully inquired into on the spot during the following year, by W. Dickson, Esq., to whom, as Convener of the Committee on Sabbath Schools, the Church is so deeply indebted. Some portions of his notes taken at the time may tend to show the reality and interesting nature of the work.

"The awakening first began in Skye about the month of April, 1843, at Unish, a small village on the west side of the island, where for some time Norman M'Leod, an old soldier, who was present at the landing in Egypt under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, had been stationed in the service of the Gaelic School Society.

"One night Norman was conducting family worship in a cot-

* Dis. Mss. xxxvii. part 2, p. 9.

tage. As was frequently the case, some others from about the doors came in to be present. Among these were some fishermen from the small Island of Issay, which is nearly opposite Unish, on the west coast of Skye. That evening, among the poor fishermen, the work of the Lord first appeared. Their minds were filled with anxiety and distress about their souls. For two days they would not go to bed at all, and would give the old man no rest from speaking to them, praying with them, and reading the Bible. Awakened to a sense of eternal realities, hearing the voice which called the fishermen of Galilee, they left their nets and followed Him. They would not rest, day nor night, till they had fled from the wrath to come. . . ."

"Shortly after the awakening began, the Rev. Roderick M'Leod came from Snizort and preached at Fairybridge, at a place where three roads met; and continued to do so weekly for a long while. On such occasions the gatherings were often very great; the numbers who left their work and came to hear were said to have been sometimes from five to nine thousand. The word was quick and powerful, and many who seemed to feel little while under it, were struck with convictions on their way home, and turned aside to pray. . . . One Wednesday he preached from the words, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.' On this occasion the presence of the Spirit of God was manifested in great power. Mr. M'Leod was using the words, 'Oh! it is not my fear that Christ will not accept you, but my fear is that you will not accept of Christ,' when the cries of the people were such that his voice was drowned, and he had to stop speaking. Some, after that solemn sermon, refused to remove from the place. When their friends offered to take them they would cry, 'Oh! will I go away without Christ? will I go home without Christ?' . . . The power which on many occasions about this time attended the preaching of the Word at Fairybridge was overwhelming."

After mentioning many striking cases of conversion among old and young, the details of which, as well as all the facts above stated, were noted down from the lips of the Rev. Roderick M'Leod, the catechists and elders who were personally engaged in the work, and which give reality to the narrative, Mr. Dick-

son records Mr. M'Leod's views as to "the probable ends for which the Lord had at this time made such wonderful displays of His power in the awakening and conversion of sinners. He said that two views in particular had occurred to him. First, that it was for the awakening of the Church of God, so long settling on her lees, to a new and realising sense of the necessity and power of the Spirit's work, and quickening her to renewed effort and diligence for the conversion of perishing souls; and secondly, that the mouth of the scoffer and infidel might be stopped, and the Gospel be anew established in evidence by manifest miracles of grace, in the same way that Christ at first established its truth to an unbelieving world by working miracles of nature."

"It was matter of common remark," Mr. Dickson adds, "both here and in Ross-shire, that wherever any one previously careless became awakened to concern for his soul, he cast in his lot with the ministers and people of the Free Church." *

From these extracts the reader will be able to form some estimate of the kind of work which was going on in Scotland. The year of the Disruption proved to be a great time of evangelistic effort in all parts of the land, and the Word of God had "free course" to the awakening of sinners and quickening of believers. In some localities the work was more quiet, in others its results were more openly manifest, but everywhere there was reason to believe that God in no common measure was giving "testimony to the word of His grace," and owning His servants in bringing sinners to Christ, and building up His people in their most holy faith.

It was not in vain, then, that the sacrifice had been made by the Church, and the testimony borne to the crown-rights of her Lord. Those tokens of success, quietly given in so many congregations, and those 'showers of blessing,' coming down in separate localities, were a rich reward. In no small measure the anticipations of Dr. Duncan were realised. "Those who valued religion and religious privileges, would go out along with their beloved pastors, and rally round them with an interest not unlike that with which our forefathers followed

* Mss. Notes of Journey to Skye, &c., in 1844, by W. Dickson, Esq.

their persecuted ministers to the retired glen and the wind-beaten mountain-side. Is it too much to anticipate as a certain consequence that, while the virtues and graces of these true-hearted men, as well as of their teachers, would be strengthened by the sacrifices which they made for the sake of their adorable Head, a spirit would by the blessing of God be awakened among those who had hitherto cared for none of those things, and, cherished by Divine grace, would spread, as it did of old, till its blessed influences might perhaps be felt over the whole mass of society? . . . Among Christ's ministers, indeed, the event would doubtless occasion many painful privations, and destroy many earthly hopes, but it would shake their hearts more loose from the cherished things of time, and give them freer scope and warmer zeal in their Master's cause, whilst among their people it would light a new and more holy flame. . . . Oh! would not this repay tenfold our privations and sufferings, while it afforded a new proof of that blessed promise, so incomprehensible to worldly men, that those who leave houses and lands and all that is dear to them on earth for the sake of Christ, shall obtain even of blessings in the present life 'manifold more' than they have abandoned, as well as what is infinitely more valuable, 'life everlasting in the world to come?'" *

* Letter from the Minister of Ruthwell to his flock.

Part II.

THE REBUILDING—THE SACRIFICES.

XXI. The Situation in June, 1843.

The Disruption having taken place under the circumstances already described, we are now to follow the Church when, no longer aided by State endowments, she suddenly found herself involved in all the difficulties of disestablishment. Outwardly, in the view of the world, the overthrow had been complete. All was lost, save the great cause for which she had contended, and which now more than ever she was bound to maintain at the cost of new sacrifices and efforts. It was not long till these additional demands began to make themselves severely felt. Before two months had passed, hundreds of thousands of the Scottish people had joined her communion; the numbers were increasing, and church-building on an extensive scale was immediately required. Six hundred and sixty-seven ministers and preachers were henceforth dependent on the contributions of the people. The entire staff of missions to Jew and Gentile must be sustained. A college had to be provided, where Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Welsh might continue their labours in training students of divinity for the service of the Church. On behalf of the expelled teachers, and for other reasons, a whole system of elementary schools was seen to be necessary. It soon appeared that manses must be built, for it was impossible to leave ministers and their families in such dwellings as have been described. A fund was also needed for the aged and infirm ministers, and another for the widows and orphans of the manse; while, to meet the whole of these and other similar requirements, the Church had absolutely nothing but the free-will offerings of her people.

If men could have paused to estimate the magnitude of such demands coming upon a portion of the Scottish people hitherto little accustomed to the habit of giving, the enterprise might well have seemed utterly hopeless. But there was no time to pause. The call of duty was plain. These things had to be done, and men felt that they must arise, and by the help of God meet as best they might the difficulties of the crisis.

Difficult enough certainly the struggle would have proved even if the hostility of the Church's adversaries had been appeased and had given way, in view of the great sacrifices to which she had submitted. Unfortunately, instead of being left at liberty to do her best in the circumstances, she continued for long to be assailed and thwarted by formidable opposition from various influential quarters.

It is not desirable after so many years to reopen the full details of those grievances and hardships, but it is obvious that if a just estimate is to be formed of the Free Church, and if the lessons of her experience amidst the difficulties of disestablishment are to be read aright, some account must be given not only of her efforts and sacrifices, but of the persistent opposition in the face of which her work had to be done.

It is the rebuilding of the Church, then, that the following pages are intended to describe—the rearing up of her external framework on the old foundations, after the overthrow of the Disruption. No attempt, indeed, can be made to give a full history of the time; the materials in the hands of the Committee are as yet far too imperfect to allow of this being done. It will be enough if the extracts and incidents here recorded shall serve in some degree to recall the general aspect of those busy years. With thankfulness we shall have to speak of help received in the hour of need—of the friends who were raised up—of the generous aid sent from foreign lands—and still more, of what was done by the zeal and self-sacrifice of the Church's own members at home. But in the multiplicity of these details there is one thing which must never be forgotten, —the sacredness of the great cause for which all was done and suffered—the spiritual independence of the Church under her Divine Head. And not less must we in humble thankfulness

recognise the hand of God leading His people forward step by step—often by a way which they knew not—till, amidst innumerable tokens of blessing, the Church has risen into the position which this day she is permitted to occupy. Surely in the retrospect of all that has been done and suffered, her members may well unite their efforts and their prayers, that, knowing the day of her visitation, the Free Church of Scotland may prove faithful to the high trust which has been given into her hands.

XXII. Temporary Places of Worship.

When the time for parting came in 1843, and the parish churches were left, the first object was to obtain temporary accommodation for the worship of God. Different methods were taken according to circumstances, and nothing in the whole history of that period is more remarkable than the strange variety of expedients which suggested themselves to the people in different parts of the country. The details may in many cases seem simple and trivial, but they serve at least to bring into view the exigencies of the time and the difficulties in which our congregations were often placed.

As was natural, wherever there were disused places of worship, they were at once applied for, and in some instances they passed by lease or purchase into the hands of the Free Church. The Independent Church at Banchory-Ternan,* for example, was fitted up anew for public worship, and opened on the 21st of May, three days after the Disruption. At Kirriemuir,† an old unoccupied Relief church was rented. In the village of Keith, Strathbogie, there were two Secession churches, and one of them, on a vacancy occurring, was sold to the Non-intrusionists. At Ellon,‡ Aberdeenshire, where "it would have been very difficult to procure a site, the way was made plain by a small chapel, with ground for enlargement, having been sold to the Free Church by a small body of Independents, most of whom united themselves to the new congregation."

* *Witness* Newspaper, 10th June, 1843. † *Ibid.*
‡ Disr. Mss. x. p. 7.

Perhaps the most remarkable case of this kind was at Greenock, where the Gaelic congregation were accommodated in the very last place that could have been expected—one of the old Established churches of the town. "The old West Kirk at the foot of Nicholson Street had been lying in a ruinous condition since the transference of the Rev. Dr. M'Farlan's congregation to the new parish church in Nelson Street in May, 1841. It had been formally condemned by the Presbytery, so far back as 16th October, 1837, as quite unfit for a place of worship, and being allowed to fall into a state of utter decay, it was at this time the very picture of desolation. But it occurred to some of the Gaelic people that if it could be procured temporarily, and the dust which lay deep on pulpit and pew cleared away, some slight repairs to the windows and roof would make it habitable until a new church could be erected. Application was accordingly made to the late David Crawford, Esq., then baron bailie, for permission to occupy it for a time, which was granted in the most courteous manner by that gentleman, so that the congregation worshipped there undisturbed for rather more than twelve months." *

Apart, however, from such exceptional cases, the common arrangement in towns was, that Dissenting congregations, at much inconvenience to themselves, gave the use of their churches at separate hours, and the cordial spirit with which this was done should not be forgotten. Three weeks before the Disruption, Dr. Lindsay Alexander at Edinburgh wrote to his neighbour, Dr. Charles Brown: "It gives me much pleasure to be able to inform you that last night, at one of the fullest church meetings at which I ever presided, it was agreed unanimously that the use of our place of worship should be offered to you and your congregation for such time as you might require it after leaving your present place.

"I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of saying that the decision was come to last night by our church without so much as one individual intimating doubt, difficulty, or dissent; and I was especially requested to say to you that we felt it to be a privilege to be enabled to show, in this way, our fraternal

* Disruption Reminiscences, &c. &c., p. 19, by A. J. Black.

regard for those who are acting so conscientious a part as that which you and your brethren are pursuing." *

At Perth, it is stated by the congregation of St. Leonard's: "We met for public worship for the first time in our separate capacity in the Original Secession Meeting-House, which was kindly offered for the purpose after their forenoon's service was over. But this house being too small for the large numbers in attendance, the two large meeting-houses belonging to the United Secession Church were, the following week, also promptly and unanimously offered for our accommodation at meetings of the managers of the respective congregations, which we gladly and gratefully accepted. The hours were so arranged as to suit all parties as conveniently as possible, but the North Secession Congregation put themselves to peculiar inconvenience on our account." †

Thus it was that, in cases far too numerous to mention, Free Church congregations found welcome at the hands of their brethren. The intercourse which followed did much to smooth away any asperities arising from former conflicts, and instances were not wanting in which kindly feelings were fittingly expressed. At Dunblane, on the 14th December, a deputation of ladies connected with the Free Church, headed by Mr. Mackenzie, their minister, and Mr. Cross, sheriff-substitute, waited on the minister of the United Secession, and in name of the congregation, presented Mrs. Henderson with two solid silver salvers as an expression of "high gratification arising from the pastoral and Christian intercourse that has been maintained by the ministers and people of these respective congregations since the period of the Disruption." ‡

In rural parishes it was usually arranged that some friendly farmer should give the use of his barn. At Garvald, East Lothian, Mr. Dodds "preached in a barn, which had been kindly granted and fitted up as a temporary place of worship, to overflowing audiences. . . . There could not be less than nearly five hundred persons present." §

* *Witness*, 20th April, 1843.
† Disr. Mss. iv. p. 4.
‡ *Witness*, 20th December, 1843.
§ *Ibid.* 28th June, 1843.

At Bowden, Roxburghshire, on the 4th June, the Rev. Thos. Jolly preached "in a large barn in the village at the usual hour. The place of meeting was so densely crowded that considerably above a hundred were unable to gain admittance." *

"In a barn," at Flisk, Fifeshire, Mr. Taylor states, "under the shadow of the Castle of Criech, which belonged in a former age to a branch of the Beaton family, we met on the first Sabbath after the Disruption. We had much anxiety before coming to the place of meeting; but all our fears were removed when we found the place quite full." †

A remarkable case was that of Mr. Stirling, of Cargill. We formerly saw his appearance as leader of the Presbytery of Dunkeld, when he stood up at the bar of the Court of Session to be rebuked. The reader may be interested in seeing him again in other circumstances when on the road to his barn. "The parish church of Cargill was vacated on the 4th June by its venerable pastor, who preached to his much attached flock, to the extent of eight hundred, in a barn belonging to Mr. James Irving, of Newbiggings. The place was found much too small, but those who could not be accommodated inside, cheerfully joined in the praise standing round the door. After solemn prayer that the Father of all would perfect His strength in their weakness, the reverend gentleman delivered an impressive discourse with a fervency which caused deep emotion, and tears started to many an eye not accustomed to weep, on beholding their aged pastor, who had broke the Bread of Life amongst them for thirty-four years, forsaking all earthly benefits, that he might be at liberty to preach the Word of God in its purity, beyond the pale of an Erastianised Establishment. . . . When the hour of worship arrived, the people from the surrounding cottages were seen in crowds thoughtfully wending their way to the place of meeting, and in the midst, their aged and venerated pastor *bearing the sacred volume beneath his arm.*" ‡

Such examples will show what was taking place in hundreds of localities over the country. The writer can never forget his own experience at Kinneff, where his friend, Mr. Hector, of

* *Witness*, 10th June, 1843.

† Disr. Mss. xxxvii. p. 10. ‡ *Witness*, 24th June, 1843.

Fernyflatt, tenant of the largest farm in the parish, had his barn seated, so as to form a commodious place of worship—this being only one of many kind services rendered to his minister and the congregation of which he was a devoted and zealous member.

Barns, however, with sufficient accommodation were not always to be had, and a great variety of other expedients had to be resorted to.

At Berriedale, in Caithness, the congregation obtained the use of a cottage—*an old schoolhouse.* After trying for a considerable time to meet in the open air, by permission of the factor they took possession of this cottage, enlarged it for the purpose, and used it for many years, till in 1857 their church was built—the only subject of regret being, that *the factor was dismissed,* losing his situation, as was believed, because of the considerate kindness he had showed to the people.*

In the village of Muthill, Perthshire, a hall was obtained. There was a Mason-lodge in the village, which would have given more ample accommodation, but the parish minister, of unhappy memory, had secured a lease of it for a year, so as to exclude the Free Church. "One other hall alone could be obtained, and the tenant let it to us almost under the ban of his superiors. We took out one of the windows, and when the hall filled, the rest of the people sat in a court-yard, and I preached to them out of the window. There was not another spot about Muthill, within or out of doors, on which we durst meet for the first two months." †

At Monquhitter, Aberdeenshire, the congregation obtained, as a temporary place of worship, a *temperance hall* in the village of Cuminestown, "which was providentially in process of building, and nearly completed at the Disruption, so that we had to worship only for three Sabbaths in the open air."‡

At St. David's, Dundee, it was *an old abandoned mill* that was got, "in the lower flat of which we found refuge until a new church was erected." §

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Caithness, p. 2.
† Disr. Mss. viii. p. 9.
‡ Parker Mss., Presb. of Turriff. § *Ibid.* Dundee, Rev. G. Lewis p. 11.

Mr. Melville, an adherent of the Establishment at Torryburn, granted Mr. Doig and his congregation the use—rent free—of *a shed* attached to his place of business, for worship, fitting up the same gratuitously with a pulpit and seats. Four-fifths of the communicants adhered with Mr. D. to the Free Church.*

There were special difficulties at Stanley, Perthshire, and they were met in an unexpected way. The large factory and most of the village belonged to a manufacturing firm who made no secret of their hostility, forbidding the use of all the rooms and halls. But if there was no place for the Free Church in the halls of the manufacturers, room was found *in a stable.* "The year before the Disruption, James M'Gregor, Esq., a gentleman who had made a fortune in America, came home to Stanley, his native district, intending to settle there for life, and for his accommodation he built a very large stable for six horses, with hay-loft above, &c. But it was no sooner completed than the commercial convulsions in America required his presence again in that country; and Mr. M'Gregor being friendly to the Free Church, this house was placed at our disposal; and with some slight alterations, it afforded accommodation and shelter to the congregation until our church was built, and it still continues [1846] to be used by us as a schoolroom. But for this building, though the builders little imagined that they were rearing a dwelling to shelter a church of Christ, the Free Church must have worshipped from May till March next year in the open air." †

At Fairlie, near Largs, Mr. Gemmel on leaving his church retired to a schoolroom, which had been built at a cost of nearly £200 by Mr. Parker and Mr. Tennent, of Wellpark, two members of the Free Church. They had, however, neglected to obtain a lease from the Earl of Glasgow, on whose ground the schoolhouse stood; and availing himself of this legal technicality, his lordship resolved to seize the property. On the following Saturday evening the factor appeared along with a notary-public, to prohibit Mr. Gemmel from again

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Dunfermline.

† Disr. Mss. v. p. 4.

entering the building. The congregation, accordingly, had to retire to *the stable* at Fairlie Lodge. Mrs. Parker had the place fitted up, and supplied with forms, and she placed in it the pulpit that had belonged to the well-known Rev. W. Scoresby, F.R.S., of Mariner's Church, Liverpool, which had come into her possession. There the congregation continued to worship for nine months, and there they were engaged in celebrating the Sacrament of the Supper on the second Sabbath of February, at the time when Mr. Gemmel's former church, after being locked up for three months, was reopened by the Established Presbytery. Mr. Gemmel, writing in 1876, and referring to the winter when they worshipped in the stable, states: "There, exposed to open doors and draughts, I received a severe cold, from which I have never entirely recovered." *

At Langton, Berwickshire, a spacious *granary* was fitted up as a place of worship by the Dowager-Marchioness of Breadalbane. Forty-five years previously it had been used in a similar way while a new parish church was being built; and some of the parishioners who had worshipped in it on that occasion were there once more to take part in the service. The Dowager-Marchioness, with her cousin, Lady Hannah Tharp, were regular worshippers; and it was interesting to see the Marquis, when on a visit, taking his place on the same benches with the rest of the people, after assisting one of the elders, who was in infirm health, into the place of honour which had been prepared for himself.

When the Disruption took place, Mr. Miller, of Monikie, "could obtain no suitable site for building a church, his personal application to the first Lord Panmure, of whom he was an intimate friend, having been refused. He obtained a meeting-place for his congregation in a *grain-loft* at Affleck. . . . At the time of the Disruption, Mr. Miller had begun to be touched by the infirmities of age; and there can be no doubt that his health and strength were still further impaired by the extremely cold and uncomfortable place of worship in

* See further details by Mr. Gemmel in Appendix to A Discourse delivered at Fairlie, &c. &c., 1844. See also Letter to Inhabitants, &c., 1876.

which the congregation met, just under the slates, and without windows. It was only after the accession to the title and estates of the present Earl of Dalhousie that the congregation were provided with a place of worship and the minister with a manse. This was nine years after the Disruption." *

At Fort-Augustus, it was not till the 28th of March, 1844, that the foundation-stone of the Free Church was laid. Previously the congregation had assembled in a large *malt-barn* from the time of the Disruption.†

At Campbeltown, the Gaelic congregation found accommodation (4th June, 1843) at *the distillery* of Messrs. John Grant & Co. A large court belonging to the works had been "almost completely covered in with a wooden roof in a day and a half by the Highlanders themselves. From 1500 to 2000 gathered, and patiently endured the cold rather than desert their ministers or their cause. The place was crowded." ‡

A still more remarkable transformation took place at Symington, in Ayrshire. "The very day after I left the old church the elders and others set to work to find a temporary place of worship, and they fortunately secured for that purpose an *old public-house*, which was then empty. They took down all its partitions, threw all its rooms into one, had it all seated by the following Sabbath, and it was sufficiently large to hold a good congregation. I preached there for nine months with great comfort and satisfaction. My pulpit was an old door laid across two small tressles, and upon it a table and chair; and it was the finest pulpit I ever occupied. It was so near the people, they were all seated around and in front of it, and as they were at that time so eager to hear the Gospel, I believe I never preached with greater effect or with more acceptance." §

Among the fishing population it sometimes happened that the only available building was a herring-store. Thus at Keiss, it is said—For the first four months after the Disruption they worshipped in a barn, but when harvest came, and the barn was required for farm purposes, they had to retire to *a herring*

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Dundee, Rev. Dr. Wilson.

† *Witness*, 6th April, 1844. ‡ *Ibid.* 10th June, 1843.

§ Disr. Mss. xlviii. pp. 11, 12, Rev. G. Orr.

storehouse, "in a compartment of which public worship was carried on, and wherein to this day [1846] the people assemble."*

In similar circumstances was the Lord's Supper dispensed at Helmsdale, on the 26th November, 1843. "To keep within bounds, the congregation must have been from 2200 to 2400, which was considered a great number for this season of the year. There was house accommodation for about 1400 in a curing-yard and stores, the front of which is closed in with deals. Some of the deals were removed to enable those outside to see and hear. The scene was solemn and affecting. So eager were the people to listen to the Gospel preached, that those outside waited patiently from 10 A.M. till 6 P.M."†

At the Disruption, two-thirds of the parishioners at Burghead followed Mr. Waters to the green, where he conducted public worship for some time. By-and-by *two granaries*—a lower and an upper floor—were rented, in which, ill-adapted though they were for the purpose, public worship was conducted on ordinary Sabbath days, while the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed in a herring-curing shed until the Free Church was built.‡

The Rev. Gustavus Aird could get no site at Croich; but one of the sheep farmers, George Murray, Esq., of Rosemount, "kindly offered to me the cottage on the farm for a dwelling, and also grass for a cow and horse, and the use of the *large wool-barn* for the congregation as a place of worship, with the exception of a few weeks in July, when it was filled with wool."§

At Oyne, Aberdeenshire, the only place of worship allowed to the minister and people is a *large cart-shed*, with a wooden addition to it, which neither excludes the summer shower nor the winter's snow. It was pitiful during the winter [of 1844] to see the old people sitting in this cold place of worship, and the snow drifting about them; and even the young people dismissed from their Bible classes on account of the cold.‖

In this way, wherever existing buildings could furnish the

* Disr. Mss. xxv. p. 3.
† *Witness*, 29th November, 1843.
‡ Parker Mss., Presb. of Elgin.
§ *Ibid.* Presb. of Tain.
‖ See *Witness*, 22nd July, 1845.

needful accommodation, they were turned to account, without waiting for a moment to consider how far their ordinary uses might be in harmony with the sacred purpose for which they were employed. Under the pressure of necessity as the people then were, outward appearances were of small account.

But there were cases of still greater difficulty where no existing accommodation, even of the humblest kind, could be obtained, and where various shifts and expedients had to be tried.

Sometimes *wooden churches* were erected. Thus at Largo, Mr. Brown and his people were allowed for two Sabbaths to occupy the parish schoolroom; but "knowing that this was to be refused for longer use, we instantly raised a wooden erection, called 'The Tabernacle,' very deficient in the shelter it afforded, and we continued to worship there until the permanent building could be got ready." *

For three Sabbaths the congregation at Woodside, Aberdeen met in the open air, on the school-ground. After that, a large temporary wooden building, seated for 1500 persons, being completed in the immediate neighbourhood, they removed thither on Sabbath, the 26th June. The number at the first dispensation of the Lord's Supper, July 2, amounted to 1351 communicants.†

For two years, says Mr. Grant, of Ayr, "we worshipped in a wooden church behind Alloway Place, which was opened by the Rev. Dr. Gordon, of Edinburgh, in October, 1843. It was infested by beetles, earwigs, and mice, annoyed by drops of rain in wet weather, and of pitch in hot summer days. Yet these were the months to which I have referred" as a time of special blessing. ‡

How rapidly these wooden structures could be put together, was seen in the case of Rhynie before the Disruption. The people had great difficulty in obtaining a site, and it was not till after very considerable delay that a suitable one was procured. "They were quite willing to put up, for a time, with temporary accommodation; and, accordingly, they formed a plan, which was successfully carried out, and with so much

* Disr. Mss. xlv. p. 2. † Diss. Mss. xxvii. p. 7.
‡ *Ibid.* xli. p. 12.

secrecy, that those who were opposed had not the slightest idea of what was going on. It was on a Saturday morning, if I recollect aright, that the congregation, and some of their friends from a distance, assembled at *a very early hour.* The necessary materials were brought in carts from a little distance to a small plot of ground out of the village, where it was believed they would not be interfered with; and such was the activity displayed, that before the shades of evening fell, they had a plain but substantial wooden church erected, in which they worshipped on the following day. There were no railways in those days, and no telegraphic communication, so that there was no time to send to Aberdeen for an interdict, had any attempt been made to obtain it." *

The example thus set was followed at a subsequent period in the neighbouring parish of Bellie. The town-hall of Fochabers was put at the disposal of the congregation, and occupied for two Sabbaths; but so many had to remain outside for want of room, that it was resolved to erect a wooden church to contain 400 or 500 hearers. On Tuesday, June 9, the parishioners commenced the work; and on Saturday a band of fifty carpenters having come up from Garmouth and volunteered their services, the whole was finished that night. The materials were carted to the ground, and the work carried on and completed free of any charge. †

At Kirkhill, where Gaelic as well as English services were required, a similar lively scene is described: "A site for the church having been kindly granted by John Fraser, Esq., on his property of Achnagairn, and Mr. John M'Lennan, merchant, Beauly, having handsomely presented manufactured timber for a place of worship, on Tuesday the people assembled and gave their gratuitous aid in erecting the building. During that and the four following days, successive relays of workmen arrived, carrying their tools with them, there being seldom less than from fifty to sixty men on the spot, some clearing the ground of whins and stones, and levelling it for the Gaelic congregation. On Saturday morning the preaching box was set up, and it was most interesting to witness the people com-

* Disr. Mss. xliv. p. 8. † *Witness*, 28th June, 1843.

ing from all quarters of the parish, and many from the neighbouring parishes, carrying forms on their shoulders, and anxiously placing them in favourable situations near the pulpit. On Saturday night the wooden church was likewise finished, neatly seated, and the pulpit erected. On Sabbath forenoon Mr. Fraser preached in Gaelic to a congregation of about two thousand, and in the afternoon in English in the church, to about four hundred, the people being densely crowded, and many being disappointed in obtaining admission." *

It was not to be wondered at if these wooden erections, owing to their homely appearance, were occasionally made the subject of sarcastic remark. A story is told of a meeting of farmers in the north, chiefly belonging to the Moderate party, where a member of the Free Church who happened to be present was asked, "How are ye getting on with your wooden kirks?" When the laugh which followed this question had subsided, he replied—"Oh, very well; but how are *you* getting on with your wooden *ministers?*" It must be confessed that these churches, intended only for temporary purposes, were often sufficiently humble, and yet there were cases in which, despite their lowly appearance, marks of respect were not withheld. The congregation of Dr. Macintosh, of Tain, accompanied him out with very few exceptions. "They met with him in a wooden building, hurriedly erected, even the magistrates of the town, preceded by their red-coated, halbert-armed officers, walking in procession, and taking their place of honour in the Free, as they were wont to do in the Established Church." †

The most interesting of these scenes, however, were the fields and hillsides, and glens, where congregations unable to find shelter met under the open canopy of heaven. A few cases will be sufficient to show the circumstances under which such gatherings were held.

After preaching his farewell sermon at Farr, Mr. Mackenzie states: "Monday, 12th June, we kept our prayer meeting in

* *Witness*, 21st June, 1843.

† Memorials of Dr. Macintosh, p. 57.

the open air, and on the 15th we observed the fast appointed by our Free Assembly, and henceforward, until December following, we met for public worship in the field, taking the most sheltered spots we could find." The reader will have no difficulty in understanding how, in the month of November, on the shores of the Northern Ocean, while meeting in the open air, it was necessary to take "the most sheltered spots" they could find. Mr. Mackenzie mentions thankfully that after December they were "allowed, unmolested, . . . to fit up a gravel-pit, where we had our canvas tent for a year."*

The state of mind in which the poor Highlanders of these northern parishes were during that season may be inferred from a statement made by Mr. Carment, of Rosskeen, in the month of November, 1843. "Old as I am, and lame through rheumatism, I lately travelled through Sutherlandshire and part of Argyllshire." . . . On visiting one of the parishes "we asked the people, 'Where's the tent [a kind of pulpit] to preach in, for we saw none near us; and what, think you, was the people's answer?' 'Oh, Mr. —— [the Factor] is here just now, and the tent's away up there'—pointing to a hill half as high as Ben Ledi or Ben Lomond, and more fitted for an eagle's eyrie than for a preaching place. 'We put it up there as *we are afraid it should be seen.*' 'Monstrous!' said I; 'how do you expect me ever to get up there? I'm not able to climb.' 'Oh, sir,' they said, 'we'll get a horse for you.' 'Impossible,' said I, 'neither horse nor man will ever get up there.' And so they had to send up messengers and bring the people down, and I preached to them in the open air at the bottom of the hill."†

Hugh Miller writes, on the 9th of July: "I have just returned from Helmsdale, where I have been hearing sermon in the open air with the poor Highlanders. . . . The congregation was numerous—from six to eight hundred at least—and all seemed serious and attentive. It must have been the power of association, but I thought their Gaelic singing, so plaintive at all times, even more melancholy than usual."‡

* Disr. Mss. xx. pp. 4, 5. † *Witness*, 4th November, 1843.
‡ Life of Hugh Miller, vol. ii. p. 358.

But such scenes were not confined to the North. At Humbie, East Lothian, Mr. Dodds states: "On Sabbath, 11th June, I preached at Upper Keith in front of the schoolhouse, from a wooden tent, to a large and attentive congregation. . . . Having had reason to believe that several of the heritors, all of whom, ten in number, were hostile to the Free Church, were about to take steps to prevent me from preaching a second time at the schoolhouse, though it was only by the highwayside, I was obliged to look out for another place of meeting for next Sabbath. A wright in the village of Upper Keith, an elder in the Secession Church, offered me the use of his woodyard, but the farmer from whom he rented it—Mr. ——, of ——, a man on whom and whose family I had been able to confer repeated obligations—interfered to prevent me from receiving that accommodation. I was at a loss what to do, when I heard that Mr. Lawson, tenant at Humbie Mains, also an elder in the Secession Church, was willing to allow us to meet on his farm, in a deep and wooded glen or ravine, called Humbie Dean. By the kind permission of Mr. Lawson, we continued to meet at that place during the whole summer, till our new church was finished."

So also at Lesmahagow in the west, Dr. Parker writes: "Our ordinary meetings for public worship were held in a field, . . . kindly granted for the purpose by Mr. Robert Frame, surgeon, a member of the Establishment. This field was admirably adapted for the object, having a gentle slope, and being surrounded on three sides by trees, which afforded partial shelter. Many a happy Sabbath we spent here under the open canopy of heaven, and here also was dispensed, on the first occasion after the Disruption, the holy ordinance of the Lord's Supper, with circumstances of peculiar solemnity, which many, I believe, will remember to their dying hour. On the green grass was the table spread, and all around were the congregation gathered, some on chairs or rustic seats which they had brought, others on the bare ground. The service commenced at half-past ten o'clock, and continued without intermission till near five." . . . After the interval of an hour, Dr. Hanna preached the evening sermon from Hebrews vi. 19.*

* Disr. Mss. xxxi. pp. 15, 16.

It is obvious that congregations compelled to worship in the open air in such a climate as that of Scotland must have met with no little discomfort, and indeed danger to life and health, but never was the goodness of God more conspicuously seen. From all parts of the country there are found in the Disruption Mss. expressions of wonder and thankfulness for the unexampled fineness of the weather during the whole summer and autumn of 1843. Generally throughout the bounds of the Free Church this had been the subject of much prayer, even in congregations who had themselves found shelter, and it afterwards appeared that among the Nonconformist Churches of England, many a fervent supplication had been offered up on behalf of their Scottish brethren. There is hardly a district, accordingly, from which we have not impressive and grateful acknowledgments of the goodness of God in connection with the fair bright Sabbaths given during those months of exposure.

Mr. Campbell, of Berriedale, Caithness, states: "I preached during the winter and spring of 1843-4, from October till May, and was not once interrupted by a shower of rain or snow all that time, and I preached almost always in the open air. Such a circumstance would seem to me incredible had I not experienced it. . . . I could not but look upon it as an evidence of God's approval of our conduct, in separating from the Establishment in the circumstances." *

At Cromarty, Hugh Miller writes: "There has been much rain of late, and it has been of great use and greatly needed, but scarce any of it fell during the time of divine service on the Sabbath. In his prayer, Mr. Stewart made appropriate mention of a goodness which could be at once favourable to exposed congregations and to the concerns of the husbandman." †

In the neighbourhood of Perth, it is mentioned by Dr. Grierson: "Till the very week before the event [the Disruption], the weather had been unusually wet, but from that week, and for four months and a-half afterwards, there was not a single Sabbath on which it rained." ‡

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Caithness.
† Life of Hugh Miller, vol. ii. p. 384.
‡ Disr. Mss. xi. p. 12.

Close to the water-shed, between the valleys of the Tay and Forth, Mr. Grant, of Braco, writes: "I took particular notice of the weather . . . and I found by a correct calculation that fifteen Sabbaths elapsed after the Disruption before even a shower fell to the inconvenience of worshippers during divine service." *

"Divine Providence remarkably interposed in behalf, not only of this congregation [Roslin], but also of many other congregations of the Free Church, by sending favourable weather on the day of holy rest, even when the state of the weather on the other days of the week did not warrant such an expectation."†

And it was the same at Ruthwell, near the borders of Scotland, on the south-west. "The first really stormy Sabbath after we became houseless we were able to take shelter under the new roof, and seated on planks to worship, while wind and rain beat without. This was in October. During the summer the threatening skies had called forth more petitions for weather tempered to our circumstances than ever we had used before. In one instance we had so tempestuous a morning that we feared it would be impossible to meet. The storm became a calm in good time, and as I set out for the Sabbath school . . . the sun shone out. When church time came the wind had dried even the turf on which we sat, and many enjoyed the Word of Life the more that our comfortable position in hearing it was regarded thankfully as an answer to prayer." ‡

But remarkable as all this was, the climate had showed enough of its fickleness to remind the hearers how much they were dependent on the special and gracious care of God.

Thus at Lesmahagow, Dr. Parker states: "During many consecutive Sabbaths of the summer of 1843, scarcely a drop of rain fell. . . . On one Sabbath in the month of August the case was otherwise. While the service was going on a dark cloud gradually overspread the sky, and the rain began to fall. I persevered for a time, but at last the rain became so heavy and

* Disr. Mss. xiii. p. 8. † *Ibid.* xiv. p. 2.
‡ *Ibid.* xvi. pp. 6, 7.

the sound of its pattering on the umbrellas so loud, as almost to drown my voice, and . . . as Mr. Logan's place of worship was that day unoccupied, we adjourned to it, and concluded the service within its walls. . . . My pulpit Bible was spotted and injured in the part which happened to be open for exposition and exposed to the rain—the Epistle to the Galatians. These spots cannot be effaced, they will continue as long as the Bible lasts, a memorial of the day. On showing them to one of my elders, he remarked, they are scars in an honourable warfare." *

At Crailing, Roxburghshire, not far from the Cheviot Hills, "there were many interesting incidents in connection with the services in the open air. On one occasion the people were assembled in a field, when suddenly the sky grew black and loud peals of thunder rolled over their heads. The preacher [Mr. Milroy] adapted his discourse to the circumstances, and dwelt on the solemnity of the voice of God. The people were then dismissed, and had only reached their homes when a most terrific storm burst over the whole neighbourhood, and lasted for the whole of that night." †

"There has been a night of weighty rain," Hugh Miller writes from Cromarty, on the morning of Sabbath, the 23rd July, "the streets have been swept clean, and the kennels show their accumulations of sand and mud high over their edges. I awoke several times during the night to hear the gush from the eaves, and the furious patter on the panes, and I thought of the many poor congregations in Scotland who would have to worship to-day in the open air. But the rain is now over, and a host of ragged clouds are careering over the heavens before a strong easterly gale."

"I do begrudge the Moderates our snug comfortable churches. I begrudge them my father's pew. It bears date 1741, and has been held by the family through times of poverty and depression, a sort of memorial of better days, when we could afford getting a pew in the front gallery. But yonder it lies empty, within an empty church, a place for

* Disr. Mss. xxxi. p. 16.

† Memorials of a Quiet Ministry, p. 50.

spiders to spin undisturbed, while all who should be occupying it take their places on stools and forms in the factory close." *

As the season went on the perils of out-door exposure began to be more severely felt. The Rev. Mr. Logan, of Lawers, who was appointed by the Free Presbytery of Breadalbane "to preach to the adhering people in Rannoch last Sabbath [15th October], could find nowhere to address them, save on the shore of the loch. It was the most inclement day we have had this season, and twice during the service did the wind reach such a height that the preacher could not hear his own voice, and it is no weak one, while the spray was ever and anon falling among the congregation." †

It was to escape such risks that the wooden churches already described were put up; but the expense was often greater than could be met in the face of other demands, and simpler expedients had to be tried. Perhaps the simplest of all was one mentioned in the *Witness* newspaper: "We have lately heard of a friendly farmer in the west who, in gratitude to God for the abundant harvest, has arranged the stacks in his stack-yard in a circle, so that the sheltered space within may accommodate the Free Church of his parish." ‡ In rendering this service to the congregation, he evidently acted under the feeling expressed in another part of the country by one of the parish-

* Life of Hugh Miller, vol. ii. p. 383. The carrying forth of stools out of the parish church of Cromarty must have been rather a remarkable scene. The time of seat-letting occurred a few days after the Assembly of 1843. Public intimation was made of the day and hour, and the sub-factor was on the spot to receive applications. "He waited in vain. Instead of the crowd who used to fill pews and passages, not a solitary sitter put in appearance. At the end of some hours, as he sat alone, a sound was heard, the shuffling of feet in the passages made it evident that a goodly number of people were entering the church. Nor was the factor disappointed, for all the poor bodies who used to occupy the passages *came to take their seats* —to take them, however, in a sense very different from the usual acceptation of the term when applied to seat-letting. For, availing themselves of the open doors, many with weeping eyes and aching hearts came to gather up their stools, and take them away from the place where prayer was wont to be made."—*Witness*, 7th June, 1843.

† *Witness*, 18th October, 1843. ‡ *Ibid.*

ioners of Muckhart, a man in humble circumstances. "Happening," says Mr. Thomson, "one day when I called upon him, to remark on the number of carriages driven by the farmers in the parish to the building of the church [carting of materials], in addition to their direct contributions, he said, 'But, sir, they have gotten it all back again.' Supposing that he alluded to spiritual benefits, I added, 'I hope they have.' His answer was: 'Yes, sir, God has given them it all back again in giving them such a harvest. They have not been called upon to turn a stook, nor yet have they had to complain of a spoiled sheaf. When had we such a harvest?'" *

In various localities tents were procured. It was a remarkable example of the law of demand and supply, that before the first Assembly of the Free Church rose, a London manufacturing firm had a specimen tent pitched close to Tanfield, and were ready to take orders. The objection in this case also was, that the expense was greater than was warrantable for a merely temporary purpose. There were parishes, however, in which they were employed.

"At first we worshipped in the open air on a green at the end of the village [Collace]. . . . Thereafter a kind friend in Dundee, who had been interested in the congregation because of the lamented Mr. M'Cheyne's connection with their pastor, provided for us a spacious canvas tent, under the roof of which we worshipped till our new church was ready to receive us. During all the time we were in this tent not a shower of rain ever annoyed us; once only there were a few drops in the time of public worship. And this was the case also in regard to our week-day meetings in it, as well as Sabbaths. The weather was so remarkable that many observed it, and it was made a matter of public thanksgiving. What led to the more impressive observation of this matter was the fact that in the following summer the weather was altogether unlike the preceding, many of the Sabbaths being wet and stormy; while, on the other hand, the Sabbath days which followed the Disruption were so favourable to us in our tent, that *the first day of wind and rain* was the very day in which we found ourselves able to meet

* Disr. Mss. xxviii. p. 10.

under the roof of the new church, which, though not seated, was sufficiently ready to afford us comfortable accommodation."*

In the parish of Forgandenny, Mr. Drummond states: "During the summer of 1843 we worshipped under a canvas tent in the corner of a small field which lies immediately to the south of the Established manse. That field, with a dwelling-house upon it, had belonged to my immediate predecessor, Mr. Willison. It consisted of two acres. In his will he left it to aid in supporting a small school at the Path of Condie. It was to be occupied by the parish minister in all time coming, at a moderate rent, to be fixed by his executors, who were to be four of the principal heritors. I accordingly occupied it till the term of Martinmas, 1843, and could not be dispossessed till then. There we pitched our humble tent, and continued to hold public worship as well as our weekly prayer meetings, till the church was ready to receive us. Had I not possessed that field, I verily believe we should not have been allowed to worship on the road side. For a while many of the people had a good deal to endure in resorting to that spot. Two ways led to it, and there two of the heritors took their stand for a number of Sabbaths, watching and even threatening those who ventured to pass them. Such conduct, however, only tended to confirm and embolden the adhering people." †

In other cases the parishioners, instead of procuring ready-made tents, fitted them up for themselves.

On Sabbath, 11th June, Mr. Thomson, of Yester, preached in the large room of the inn at Gifford to an audience of upwards of 400. As this place of meeting could not be used with safety, and as no barn or other place of worship could be procured for the adhering congregation, it was resolved to erect a tent; but instead of purchasing one from London, a village wright was employed. Two cart-loads of wood-thinnings‡ were kindly sent by John Martine, Esq. of Moreham Bank; and with these the walls were formed. Unbleached cloth was got from Edinburgh to cover the walls, and stronger material from Dundee to form the roof. Care was taken to have ventilation

* Disr. Mss. xxi. p. 3. † *Ibid.* liii. pp. 14, 15.

‡ *Witness*, 21st June, 1843.

without draughts, and in the course of a week, it is said, the place was ready, capable of containing very comfortably 500 persons; and it has been crowded ever since. During the late very severe rains it was not affected in the smallest degree. And to crown all, the entire cost will hardly amount to £17, while already the minister has been offered half-price for the materials when he has got his new church erected.

"It was situated in a very pleasant and romantic spot, beside a running stream and waterfall, the sound of which suggested to a worthy lady the place by the river-side, 'where prayer was wont to be made,' and where Lydia 'attended unto the things spoken by Paul.'" *

At even an earlier date, similar steps had been taken at Blairgowrie, the following account of which we give at length, along with the various incidents that occurred in connection with the tent:—

"We had been over in Edinburgh attending the never-to-be-forgotten Assembly of May, 1843, and returned home on Friday, the 2nd June, reaching the manse in the course of the afternoon. The first object which greeted our view was a large tent that had been erected in our absence, on a piece of ground adjoining the glebe-field, conspicuous from the manse, and still more so from the only road leading up to the Established Church; so that it was impossible to go there without beholding this speaking testimony of the people's faithfulness to the crown rights of the Redeemer. It was put up while we were in Edinburgh at the General Assembly, begun and finished in about two days, and capable of containing nearly a thousand people—a labour of love, in which many willing hands and loving hearts helped. And it will ever be associated in our memory as a sanctuary which God hallowed by His presence—making it a birthplace of souls, and greatly refreshing His people. We owed it mainly to the kindness of our dear elder, Mr. John Thain, shipowner in Dundee. He it was who furnished us with sail-cloth sufficient for its covering; and, when finished, with its patchwork cover of black and white sails, a thinner piece of canvas round the sides serving as walls, windows, and

* Rev. Dr. Thomson, Paisley, formerly of Yester, Disr. Mss. lvii.

blinds, we thought it a wonderful structure. The site had been chosen and materials for its erection laid down a day or two before we went to the Assembly. And when Sir William Chalmers, of Glen Ericht, one of our heritors, beheld these sure indications of the coming separation, he called at the manse and, with deep emotion, said, 'Oh, Mr. Macdonald, is it really come to this! Can nothing be done to save the Disruption?' Although an Episcopalian, he was deeply concerned at the breaking-up of the Establishment; and when afterwards some of the Moderate party tried to prevent our having a bell to our Free Church, he resisted the movement, and said, 'If they stop the bell, I shall send down my own gong.'

"Wearied by all the exciting scenes through which we had passed, we were glad to retire to rest. Next morning, shortly after breakfast, a deputation of our people came to the manse with a request that we would allow them to flit us, adding, that as the minister would on the morrow be in his new church, they would like him also to be in his new house. To this we could not agree, things were not in a state for so summary a removal; and the confusion we felt would be all the greater, as the manse was large, whereas our new abode was simply three rooms and a bedcloset in a new house built by one of our elders, who very kindly gave up these rooms for our use, whilst his own family occupied the rest, the kitchen being used between us; and we could not imagine how all our furniture could be got stowed away. Besides, it was Saturday, and we dreaded the impossibility of getting all settled before night. In vain, however, did we reason. They continued still to urge, until at length we consented, and in a few minutes men, women, and children fell to work, and Saturday, by night, we were fairly settled in our new house—nor was a single thing missing, nor aught in any way injured. The only martyr to principle was our poor cat. So strongly was she attached to the manse, that no means could prevail on her to leave it; and there is reason to fear that she came to an untimely end.

"Sabbath, the 4th June, was our first in our new tent-church; and truly it was one of the most solemn, sweet, and blessed Sabbaths we ever enjoyed. At an early hour the tent was

completely filled. It was seated for nearly 1000 people; but as forms were placed all round outside also, the number assembled was very large. There was just one door of entrance, with a long, narrow passage leading to the pulpit at the other end. Seats neatly covered with white cotton cloth were placed very close upon each other on both sides, with a piece of board under each, which, as every seat was filled, was drawn out and placed between the two opposite, so that there was no getting out or in till a general movement was made at the close of the service. The whole ground had been thickly laid over with sawdust; and when the minister entered, preceded by his glebe-servant, now transformed into his beadle, and with noiseless step walked up the long passage to the pulpit, the feelings of the people were stirred to their very depths, and many a tear stole silently down the cheek. At first, when the psalm was given out, no one joined—emotion choked their utterance; but at last a loud peal of praise burst forth, and the grand Old 100th Psalm was sung with intense gratitude and thanksgiving. The presence of the Lord was felt throughout the whole service—it seemed, indeed, the house of God and the very gate of heaven.

"At the close of the sermon a movement was made near the pulpit, and it was evident that some difficulty or other had occurred. This was soon explained. Two infants were to be presented for baptism; but as it was impossible they could be borne through the dense crowd, the question was how they could be got in. Happily the thought occurred of cutting the canvas near the pulpit, and through this somewhat novel entrance the little ones were handed in to the parents inside, and were baptised. One, if not both of these, are now heads of families. All the time we worshipped in the tent—about five or six months—God's answers to prayer were most striking. Often on the Saturdays the rain poured in torrents, but by Sabbath the sun and wind were sent, and we worshipped in comfort."*

There was one class of cases for which tents were held to be peculiarly adapted—those in which sites had been refused.

* Disr. Mss. lv. pp. 2-6.

The idea was, that as tents were movable, the people might carry their churches from place to place, in search of some spot where standing-ground could be had. As Mr. Dunlop stated in the first General Assembly, "Large tents had been provided which could hold about 500 people, and which did not weigh more than four hundredweight; so that they might be carried from place to place in a small cart or boat along the sea-shore from farm to farm, so that when driven from one quarter, the people might escape the tyranny by transporting them to another." *

Occasionally this was put to the proof, as in the parish of Fortingal, Perthshire. "All the heritors were extremely hostile, so that no site could be obtained; a tent, however, was procured, and erected on the common hitherto used as a market-place. No sooner, however, did the laird, on whose property this common lies, get notice of what had taken place, than he immediately sent a peremptory order to have the tent removed. The good people of Fortingal immediately turned out and carried their tent shoulder-high over the River Lyon, and placed it safely on the land of the Marquis of Breadalbane." †

In certain districts it is strange to think of the difficulties which had to be overcome before a footing could be obtained.

Sometimes the opposition came from the manse. "A minister in East Lothian wrote to the Earl of Haddington requesting him to prevent a tenant from giving the use of his barn to a Free Church minister, as he wished to keep him out of his parish. His Lordship replied, that he was not in the habit of interfering with the use which his tenants made of their barns, and that the true way to get the Free Churchman out of the parish was to *preach him out.*" ‡

In Fife, the Rev. Mr. Thomson, of St. Ninian's, Leith, met with a yet more remarkable experience. "Early in the summer of 1843, I was sent by the Committee on the interim supply of ordinances to preach for three Sabbaths at St. Andrews, with instructions to preach on the intervening week evenings in all

* Assembly Proceedings, 1843, p. 46.

† *Witness*, 22nd July, 1843. ‡ *Ibid.* 7th October, 1843.

the neighbouring parishes. In these duties I derived valuable assistance from a band of devoted divinity students. Among other parishes my attention was directed to ——, the minister of which had been heard to declare that no Non-intrusionist should ever enter his parish. Arrangements had been made for a place of meeting; a farmer, who was a Dissenter, having at once, on being applied to, agreed to place his barn at our service. Accordingly we set out at the hour appointed. We had not gone far before we learned that adverse influence had been brought to bear upon the farmer, and that his barn was locked against us. We proceeded onward, hoping to find a spot where the service might be held in the open air. When a little farther on, we were met by a working man with a very kindly expression, who, on ascertaining our errand, entreated us not to go forward, as a party had been sent to St. Andrews by the minister's son to purchase a large quantity of fireworks which were to be thrown at us. We thanked the man, but said we would face the fireworks. On arriving in the parish we found a large mass of people, eagerly waiting for us on the public road. We were told that no place could be got other than the public road, except one; 'But,' added our friend, 'it is a wood-yard, and we cannot go there for fear of the fireworks.' I replied at once, 'It is the safest of all places, for though they may not hesitate to injure us, they may take care not to set a wood-yard in a blaze.' We had a very quiet and enjoyable meeting, and though many efforts were made to get up a disturbance, so completely were all arrested and subdued, that I had a good opportunity of making a full statement of the principles of the Church. On returning to St. Andrews we met the fireworks on the road, but alas! they were too late." *

Usually, however, it was the proprietor and his factor who were eager, if possible, to suppress the Free Church. In some cases even standing-ground was refused. "In the parish of Logie there is a large gravel-pit in a fir wood, in which on sacramental occasions the outdoor congregation used to assemble. At other times it is a famous resort of the gipsies. Their smoke may be seen rising over the trees six months

* Disr. Mss. liv.

in the year, and their rude tents pitched in a corner of the hollow. Some of the neighbouring farmers and cottars expressed a wish not very long ago, that persons so dangerous and disreputable should be prevented from making it a place of resort, but they were told by the proprietor's *doer* to be kind to the gipsies and they would find them harmless. On the Disruption the minister of Logie respectfully applied for leave to erect his preaching tent in the hollow, in the expectation, fond man, of being permitted to rank with the gipsies. But alas, no! Tinkers may be patronised as picturesque, but the Free Church is dangerous, and so the use of the hollow was promptly and somewhat indignantly refused." *

In the parish of Dunbeath the people were denied a site, but after worshipping during the summer in the open air, they bethought them as winter approached, of "erecting on a very extensive moss, a rude temporary structure composed of useless turf, such as boys tending cattle on the hills are accustomed to rear. Having witnessed the erection of many rude bothies for the sale of whisky, where it had been well for the temporal and spiritual interests of the tenants if such erections had been interdicted," the people concluded that, driven as they were to this alternative, they would forthwith proceed to raise this shieling. They thought it right, however, to let the representative of the proprietor know of their intention, but the reply to the very humble request of the people was, that no such erection could be allowed—no shelter of any kind could be given to the adherents of the Free Church. †

At Menmuir, Forfarshire, the parishioners had to worship for a time in the open air. The village carpenter was willing to give the use of his workshop, but the consent of the landlord was necessary, and this was applied for in the most respectful and even humble terms. In answer, they were told that there was room in the parish church; that he, the proprietor, had no objection to let those of them who were his tenants resign their leases and go elsewhere. "Having given you unasked leave of becoming free, I must insist, if you do not take advantage of it,

* Life of Hugh Miller, vol. ii. p. 382.

† *Witness*, 2nd December, 1843.

that you do nothing in future to attempt to intrude on my ground any promulgation of your peculiar views." The local press called attention to the fact, that being himself an Episcopalian, the landlord declined to attend the church to which he wished to compel all his people to go, and added—"We do much mistake the spirit of the Menmuir people generally, if the . . . paltry persecution with which they are now visited do not make them cling closer to a church which is standing up for the civil as well as the spiritual freedom of the people." * This anticipation proved correct. The people stood fast, and the cause of the Free Church took firm root in the parish.

In the case of Edzell, another of these Forfarshire parishes, Lord Panmure, when the people applied for a site, refused their request in no gentle terms. Mr. Inglis, however, the outgoing minister, held a small piece of land on lease from his lordship, and there he had a tent erected, but not in the first instance so successfully as in the parishes already referred to. On Sabbath, the 4th June, he says: "I preached at the manse door from Titus ii. 13, 14. Frail and infirm persons were taken into the rooms and passages of the manse so that they could hear, and a large congregation were seated upon hastily made forms and upon the grass at the door. I went into a private room sometime before the hour of worship, and my feelings were indescribable. I remember as the hour drew very near, that I was almost despairing of any one coming, when, just as the clock warned to strike, I heard the patter of a single coin fall into the plate which was near the window where I sat. I was in such a state of agitation that I could not look up to see who it was that put it in. Immediately there was the patter of another, then a continual patter patter patter, till I went out and stood at the table on which the Bible and Psalm-book had been placed. I did not miss many of the familiar faces that I had been accustomed to see in the church, but how different the surroundings. The beautiful grass on which many of the congregation were reclining, and the green hedge bounding the little lawn, the full-leaved trees skirting one side, the everlasting mountains in Lethnot and Lochlee, and the upper part of

* *Witness*, 22nd July, 1843.

Edzell towering in the distance, and the bright midsummer sun shining down upon us in all his glory. This was the only difficulty which I provided against on future Sabbaths, by driving a pole into the ground, tying an outspread umbrella upon the top of it, and moving round so as to keep it between me and the sun. That sermon was not preached in vain. Many took notice of it, and even spoke unto their dying day of the benefits they had received from it. . . . I looked upon this as a reward for all the sacrifices I had made and was making. I preached the two following Sabbaths at the manse door to increasing audiences, the weather continuing so propitious that every person was taking notice of it.

"I had arranged to leave the manse as soon as possible, and when I left, the manse door could no longer be the place of meeting for the congregation. Accordingly, arrangements were made for erecting a tent on a piece of the barren ground that I rented, and only about one hundred yards west from the parish church. A framework of wood was put up, and covered with drugget got at a low rate from a member of the congregation. . . . On the 25th June I preached for the first time in the tent. It was only about half covered with drugget, and during the service a gale of wind rose and shook the framework so much that the congregation were greatly alarmed. The gale increased in the afternoon and during the night, but the tent stood till between five and six o'clock on Monday morning, when a heavy blast levelled it with the ground. . . . The tent was re-erected, and the framework strengthened and covered with deal, to be afterwards used in the roofing of the church. The drugget was sent to Menmuir, and used as a tent by the congregation there till they got their church erected."

Mr. Inglis goes on to tell of a series of legal proceedings to which Lord Panmure and his factor had recourse in order to break the lease:—"The secret of their wish to get the land, and my desire to keep it, was that the Free Church tent was erected upon it; and if they had got possession, the tent would have been immediately pulled down, and the congregation would have had no place to meet in. One day after this, Mr. ——, who was a frequent visitor at Brechin Castle [Lord

Panmure's residence], met me in the muir at Edzell; and looking to the tent, which was a great eyesore to certain persons, he said: 'Do you know that Lord Panmure says he is to make a dog-kennel of that thing?' I immediately replied: 'Give my compliments to Lord Panmure, and tell him he must ask my leave first.'"* Mr. Inglis was successful in retaining his right to the lease, and the tent was undisturbed.

It was in the North of Scotland, however, that tents most frequently came into use. They were of the best manufacture, and were supplied at the expense of the general funds of the Free Church, but amid the storms of those northern coasts they were subjected to weather of which their makers had evidently little idea. Two examples which are here given will show the hardships which had to be encountered.

Mr. Davidson, of Kilmalie, records his experience:—

"I preached my last sermon in the parish church on the 4th day of June, 1843, and on the following Sabbath I preached in Kilmalie churchyard, where I had the pleasure of seeing the greater part of the church-going people of the parish come out along with me. I continued to preach to my people in the churchyard for about two months, till we were excluded by the force of an interdict from the heritors of the parish, instigated, no doubt, by the Established Presbytery of the bounds.

"When thus excluded by interdict from the churchyard, we took up our next position on a little green spot upon the sea-shore, within high-water mark, immediately below the public road, opposite the monument of Colonel John Cameron, where we continued to assemble for public worship for a period of five months in the open air, without anything to cover or protect us from the inclemencies of the weather excepting a small canvas tent for myself. On this spot we had our first Communion after the Disruption, on the 30th day of July, 1843, which was well attended from all parts of the country.

"From the 1st January, 1844, I preached to my people in a large canvas tent, capable of containing from six hundred to eight hundred people, erected close to the sea-shore, on the site

* Memorials of the Disruption in Edzell, &c., Rev. R. Inglis, 1872. pp. 14-23.

now occupied by the garden attached to Mr. Simpson's cottage, on the part to the west of the cottage. Under the cover of this large canvas tent the congregation were comparatively comfortable so long as it lasted—*i.e.*, during a period of one year and three months. On the 30th of March, 1845, this tent was most completely destroyed by a storm, with the exception of the side-walls, which were supported and protected by wooden slabs six feet high all round. Within this humble enclosure, or remains of the tent, I was enabled to preach to my people assembled for public worship during a period of two years and four months, exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, summer and winter, until in August, 1847, a wooden shed was erected on a part of the ground then at length given for a site for the church and manse. There the people continued to assemble for public worship, and I continued to officiate every Sabbath for a period of about twelve months while the church was a-building." *

On the Communion Sabbath above referred to, there was among the audience one who was well able to record his impressions. "We attended," writes Hugh Miller, "about two months ago, the public service of a Communion Sabbath in Lochiel's country. The congregation consisted of from three to four thousand persons, and never have we seen finer specimens of our Highland population. We needed no one to tell us that the men at our side—tall, muscular, commanding, from the glens of Lochaber and the shores of Lochiel—were the descendants, the very fac-similes, of the warriors whose battle-cry was heard farthest amid the broken ranks at Preston, and who did all that almost superhuman valour could do to reverse the destinies of Culloden. And yet here they were assembled as if by stealth—the whole population of a whole district—after being chased by the interdicts of the proprietor from one spot of ground to another. . . . They had gone first to the parish burying-ground. It was the resting-place of their brave ancestors. One family had been accustomed to say, 'This little spot is ours;' and another, 'This little spot is ours;' and they reasoned, rationally enough, that as the entire area belonged to

* Paper by Mr. Davidson, Parker Mss., Presb. of Abertarff.

them in its parts, it might be held to belong to them as a whole also, and that they might meet in it, therefore, to worship their God over the ashes of their fathers. Alas! their simple logic was met by a stringent interdict. . . . As we stood and listened, the rippling dash of the waves mingled with the voice of the preacher; and there, half on the beach and half on an unproductive strip of marginal sward, . . . did meet to worship God, patient and unresisting, though grieved and indignant, from three to four thousand of the bravest hearts in Scotland."*

A companion picture we take from Durness, a scene vividly described by the Rev. Eric Findlater, of Lochearnhead, who had gone north to preach for his father. The reader will specially notice the characteristic action of the Highlanders, drawing their plaids closer, and fixing their thoughts on the sermon.

The scene "had nothing very remarkable about it, at least for those days. It occurred on the 18th of February, 1844. During that month there had been a heavy snowstorm in the North. Although negotiations were going on between the Duke and the people for sites, they had not come to a satisfactory conclusion, and, like their brethren in the neighbouring parishes, my father's people were forced to worship under shelter of one of those canvas tents which were sent to various places where sites had been refused, from Edinburgh. In calm weather they did tolerably, but their continued exposure to wet, and especially the gales of that climate, soon began to tell on them, for there, especially in winter, Boreas reigns. The one at Durness was pitched in a gravel-pit, in a centrical part of the parish. On the north-west side it was sheltered by a Gaelic schoolhouse, which belonged to the people, and on the west by a high wall, which they themselves built, in order to break the force of the prevailing wind, the W. and S.W. In the centre of it stood the wooden box from which the minister used to address them on the hillside—it was, in short, a movable pulpit. In it I was preaching on the said Sabbath of February. When about the middle of my sermon, which was in Gaelic, there came on a snow-shower, accompanied

* *Witness*, 27th September and 7th October, 1843.

by a fierce blast from the north. The consequence was that the cloth gave way—it was rent from top to bottom. The people sat still, while a few of the more active young men, expert at the furling of sails, from their intimacy with the sea, in fewer minutes than I take to describe it, laid hold of the fluttering mass, and secured it to the poles with its own cords. I then turned my back to the blast, and having covered my head with a handkerchief, went on and finished my discourse. The people crouched a little closer to each other, and adjusted their cloaks and plaids, and then continued to listen as if nothing had happened. If they thought of their ill-advised landlord, it was but for a moment, for they seemed to feel as if their business was with One, from listening to whose message not even the wrath of men ought to move them."

"The scene where this incident occurred lies about a quarter of a mile from the sea-shore, but overlooking the ocean. On a fine day it is a fair prospect that presents itself to the eye. In the foreground there are some high rocks, farther in the distance the Whiten Head stands majestically forth, as if doing homage to the Northern Ocean as the rays of the evening sun fall upon its venerable but wrinkled face, while in the distance appear the storm-swept Orcades, their dissolving blue commingling with that of the sky; but on such a day as that it was a far different picture. The shore was one continued line of foam and spray. The multitudinous waves lifted up not only their crests, but their voices. The Whiten Head looked sullen from under a cloud, while the Orkney Islands were hid in the womb of the storm. Yet, while we were worshipping under such circumstances, the lord of the soil on which we stood was perhaps worshipping the same God under the roof of some aisled and groined cathedral in his cushioned pew, his eyes delighted with dim religious light, and his ears regaled with the sounds of the solemn organ."*

The incidents and details now given will enable the reader to form some idea of the difficulties with which pastors and people had to contend all over Scotland, and what were

* Disr. Mss. lvi.

the strange circumstances under which the worship of God had to be conducted. Our Presbyterian Churches, it is well known, do not recognise the peculiar sanctity of consecrated buildings—the sacredness of divine worship, according to their ideas, depending rather on the spirituality and devoutness of mind with which the worshippers draw near to God. Under the pressure of necessity, indeed, in that season of 1843, there was no alternative; all external circumstances were lost sight of in far higher thoughts. Barns and stables, and old mills and granaries, wool-stores and malt-barns, and cart-sheds and saw-pits, and wooden churches and tents—all kinds of accommodation were welcome anywhere, under any roof that could give them shelter; and when everything else failed, then out in the open air, among the green fields and glens. It was amid such strange surroundings that from week to week hundreds of thousands of the most earnest minds in Scotland came together for the worship of God. If one could combine into a single picture these various scenes, it would form a spectacle such as no country in modern times has witnessed, and one which, in the estimation of many, is not altogether unworthy to be associated with the memories of former days of trial and struggle. Many a time under those lowly roofs, or out on those bare hillsides, men's thoughts went back to the days of persecution when our covenanting forefathers met for the worship of God amid the glens and moors of our native land, or to scenes associated with memories more sacred still—the river-side at Philippi, where prayer was wont to be made—the boat floating on the Sea of Galilee, out of which One spake as man never spake—or the lonely desert which the presence of God turned into a Bethel, the very gate of heaven.

But without attempting to follow out such thoughts, we turn to the statements of those ministers and people who were actually engaged in these services.

"At one time I was called," says Mr. M'Indoe, of Galston, in describing his experience during the summer of 1843, "to address an audience in an open shed, at another in a splendid hall, and again in a crowded schoolroom, with temporary

PREACHING AT THE SEA-SIDE.

wooden erections, where the people could only obtain an occasional glimpse of the minister. Most encouraging, however, it was to witness the humble peasant and the titled nobility pouring their offerings into the treasury of the Lord, and afterwards taking their seats on the same bench, and listening with eagerness to the words of eternal life." *

"When the weather permitted," writes Mr. Gibson, of Kirkbean, "we met in the open air, and served God in the open plain, or on the mountain-side, or along the sea-shore. As attested by many, these were precious Sabbaths, sweet times to souls. Jehovah Shammah—the Lord was there." †

Such testimonies on the part of ministers it is not needful to multiply.

From among the hearers, we may refer to a letter of Mrs. Coutts, well known in the Edinburgh circles of that day, as one whose heart and whose wealth were consecrated to the cause of Christ. She writes from the Bridge-of-Earn: "In the *coal-shed* which we have as a tent, I have sat five Sabbaths with much delight, with between 600 and 700 worshippers. I do think ministers and people seem enlarged and solemnised." ‡

In greater detail, and with his own graphic power, Hugh Miller conducts us into the midst of one of these lowly assemblies. In the Island of Eigg, "the building in which the congregation meets is a low *dingy cottage of turf and stone.* . . . We found the congregation already gathered, and that the very bad morning had failed to lessen their numbers. There were a few of the male parishioners keeping watch at the door, looking wistfully out through the fog and rain for their minister; and at his approach nearly twenty more came issuing from the place, like carder bees from their nest of dried grass and moss, to gather round him and shake him by the hand. . . . Rarely have I seen human countenances so eloquently vocal with veneration and love. . . . The rude turf building we found full from end to end, and all asteam with a particularly wet congregation, some of whom, neither very robust nor young, had travelled in the soaking drizzle from the further extremities

* Disr. Mss. xxxv. p. 9. † Disr. Mss. xxiii. p. 4.

‡ Memoir of Mrs. Coutts, p. 391.

of the island. And judging from the serious attention with which they listened to the discourse, they must have deemed it full value for all it cost them. I have never yet seen a congregation more deeply impressed, or that seemed to follow the preacher more intelligently; and I was quite sure, though ignorant of the language in which my friend addressed them, that he preached to them neither heresy nor nonsense. There was as little of the reverence of externals in the place as can well be imagined. An uneven earthen floor—turf walls on every side and a turf roof above; two little windows of four panes apiece, adown which the rain-drops were coursing thick and fast; a pulpit grotesquely rude, that had never employed the bred carpenter; and a few ranges of seats of undressed deal. Such were the mere materialisms of this lowly church of the people; and yet here, notwithstanding, was the living soul of a Christian community, understandings convinced of the truth of the Gospel, and hearts softened and impressed by its power." *

Yet another of these scenes we have it in our power to give, interesting in itself, and important as an indication of how much our Church owes to the services of that first summer, not only in large congregations, but in retired rural districts.

"During the summer of 1843, my father's family resorted for country quarters, as we had done for some summers before, to that part of the parish of Roseneath which looks out on Loch Long, and down towards Dunoon and Arran. In previous seasons the pedestrian part of the family used to cross the moor to the parish church of Roseneath, while those who were not up to walking proceeded to the same destination in a seated cart, by the beautiful road which, after winding at some height above the sea in full view of Arran and the Gourock and Greenock hills, turns inland through a valley, and crossing a peninsula, emerges again on the sheltered shores of the Gareloch, and follows them up to the clachan of Roseneath.

"The arrangements for the Disruption congregation were made by Mr. Lorne Campbell, the excellent commissioner of that part of the Argyll estates. A *saw-pit*, adaptable beyond most saw-pits, was utilised for the purpose. It was in the valley

* *Witness*, 19th April, 1845.

above referred to, and not very far from the site of the present Free Church, but nearer the Gareloch, if I remember right. The sawn planks helped the accommodation, and I am not sure but some shelter was knocked up which partly protected the congregation; or rather, a few of them, for most of us sat *sub jove*. It was a beautiful summer, and I remember some very hot Sundays. I remember still more the animation of the preaching, and the cordiality of the hearing; some who are gone hence are much associated in my mind with the peculiar mood of thankfulness, tenderness, and hope which characterised these Sabbaths of 1843. That year made me a minister."*

At last these memorable months passed away, and in October, when the General Assembly met at Glasgow, presided over by Dr. Brown, of St. John's, one of the most devout and earnest men who ever sat in that place of honour, this was his testimony, as given from the moderator's chair:

Our ministers "have gone forth and scattered the seed of the Word in every corner. They have preached by the seashore or the river's brink, in the retired glen or the mountainside, and in many instances with powerful and blessed effect. In many of the districts which they visited, the doctrine which they preached or their mode of preaching it was new. In many corners the cold chilling—at best but moral—disquisitions and addresses issuing from many pulpits (we make exceptions), had induced an apathetic indifference to the things of God and eternity; but the soul-melting, heart-subduing strains of the Gospel, accompanied by stirring appeals to the conscience, aroused, and captivated, and enchained many. Many a parched spot has thus been watered and refreshed, and many a soul, we doubt not, has been brought to a knowledge of the truth, and won to the Saviour. Had no other good effects flowed from the Disruption, this of itself is a blessed consummation, proving that God can and will bring good out of evil; for oh! what are all our movements to be directed to, what are we to covet and sigh for, but that a people may be gained unto the Lord, and brands plucked from the everlasting burning." †

* Statement by Principal Rainy, New College, Edinburgh.

† Assembly Proceedings, Glasgow, 1843, p. 178.

XXIII. Church Building.

We have thus seen what a happy time of blessing it was during the bright days of that first summer after the Disruption. All temporary inconveniences in those strange meeting-places were welcomed and made light of The very novelty of the scene, the freedom from conventional restraint, gave zest and interest to the service; men felt they were acting under a sense of duty; the heart was enlarged, and never was there deeper earnestness and never brighter or happier Sabbaths. But the stormy months of a Scottish winter were coming, the building of substantial churches was obviously a matter of urgent necessity, and ere-long architects and tradesmen in every district of Scotland had their energies taxed to the uttermost. As Mr. Lewis, of Dundee, expresses it, "All were now as busy building as before in battling for our freedom, that we might again raise our heads as a Church in the land." * Before the month of June was past, one of the ministers wrote: "An acute sense of the dangers of winter is the reason why at all hazards the resolution was taken yesterday to begin the work of building instantly, and to-day I shook hands with a tenant driving his own horses with the first two carts of lime, while others are loading the sand. . . . One carpenter subscribes six weeks' work." †

The most formidable difficulty, however, was to know where the funds were to come from. If the 600 or 700 churches were to be of stone and lime, roofed and slated, and properly fitted up inside, would not the cost be enormous—out of all proportion to the resources of the people? The committee

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Dundee. Paper by Rev. G. Lewis, p. 13.

† *Witness*, 28th June, 1843.

sitting at headquarters in Edinburgh gave it as their opinion, in February, 1843, that "the expense of such erections for all the congregations of the Church, even on the most moderate scale of expense for buildings of that description, would exceed half-a-million sterling, and any attempt therefore to realise the object in that way would at once crush and overwhelm the Church under an insuperable load, and leave it struggling after an unattainable object, with its energies cramped and paralysed."*

Holding these views—and it was impossible to judge otherwise at the time—there had been much serious deliberation among our leading men. The advice of eminent architects and builders had been taken, and the results were brought out by Dr. Candlish, so early as the great West Church meeting, held in August, 1841. On that memorable occasion—one of the marked turning-points of the conflict—two announcements were made which had no small influence on the course of events. First, it was in contemplation to erect churches partly of wood and partly of brick, roofed with felt, and if such buildings were heated and ventilated on approved principles, they would be found sufficiently comfortable, and might be put up at moderate expense. This was followed by the still more important suggestion that the wealthy congregations in towns and the poorer congregations in the country should go hand in hand, uniting to raise a general building fund, out of which all should receive share and share alike. Among the pre-Disruption ministers who still survive, there must be some who can to this day recall the sense of relief with which these announcements were welcomed. When the great enterprise of church building was placed on this footing, men began to see their way, as if the undertaking were fairly brought within the limits of possibility, and might really be entered on with some hope of success.

At last the time came when such general suggestions had to be put in shape, and practically carried out. A building committee was appointed, having at its head Mr. John Hamilton, advocate, one of the Church's most esteemed and ablest laymen.

* First Circular, p. 2.

With great wisdom, as the event proved, it was resolved that money should be raised in two ways. First, there was to be the general fund already spoken of, but along with that there was to be a local fund in each parish, every separate congregation being expected to do what they could for themselves. In this way the generous feelings of the richer congregations were powerfully appealed to, urging them to do their utmost in aid of their poorer brethren in remote localities; while, on the other hand, the weaker congregations were encouraged and stimulated by the knowledge that they had behind them the general funds of the Church on which to lean. Detailed plans of those brick churches, along with practical suggestions, were sent forth to all corners of the land.

Everything was now ready for action—plans were adjusted, and on the eve of the Disruption, when the event had become inevitable, the actual appeal for funds was sent forth. The result proved a signal rebuke to many whose faith had been weak. God, whose is the silver and gold, touched the hearts of His people, and the flow of contributions which came into the treasury was like the rush of pent-up waters. From the wealthier members, gifts followed in rapid succession of from £100 to £500 and £1000. But far more important were the contributions of the middle classes and the poor, who pressed eagerly forward, as if they felt that this was a great national Christian work in which they must be allowed to have their part. A few days after the Disruption had taken place, it was announced in the General Assembly that the contributions to the two branches of the building fund, general and local, amounted together to £104,776. By the time the next Assembly came round, there had been added a sum of £123,060, and during the succeeding year, a further sum of £131,737 had been raised, so that by the month of May, 1845—two years after the Disruption—the free-will offerings of the people for the building of their churches alone had risen to the sum of £359,573. And beyond this there was the value of ground given for sites, materials, and driving free of charge, and gratuitous labour, representing in all a very large additional sum.

The great difficulty, however, in some parts of the country was

to obtain a site on which to build. Already we have seen how hard it was in many parishes to get ground on which to set up a tent or wooden shed. The objection was, of course, still greater when it came to actual church building. In the long run, the more flagrant cases of site-refusing had to be brought before a committee of the House of Commons; but these we reserve for separate notice in a future section. In the meantime, it may be interesting to mention some of the parishes in which difficulties were overcome, and sites obtained at an earlier period.

Here, however, it is only right to make due acknowledgment of the honourable conduct of Lord Aberdeen. During the Ten Years' Conflict, so long as the fight went on, the Church had no more determined or formidable opponent, but no sooner had the Disruption taken place on a scale so different from what he had been taught to expect, than he at once acted towards the members of the Free Church in the most kind and liberal spirit. In the parish of Fyvie, when Mr. Manson and his friends applied for a site—which they did with many misgivings—an immediate reply came from his lordship at the Foreign Office, expressing his difference of opinion, and his deep regret at the step which they had seen it to be their duty to take, but frankly agreeing to give them all the accommodation they required.

In the neighbouring parish of Methlic, where the family residence, Haddo House, is situated, he acted in a way not less considerate and kind. The whole account deserves to be given, though it somewhat anticipates the course of events.

The parish minister was opposed to the Free Church, and the earlier movements in favour of the cause had been on a slender scale. The first meeting in the parish was held by Mr. M'Cheyne in February, 1843, when a deep impression was produced, but only seven individuals signed the Convocation resolutions. A second meeting was held on the 10th of June, one of the farmers giving his barn in spite of a "home-made interdict by the factor." Between two hundred and three hundred people attended, more than the barn could hold, and were addressed by the Rev. G. Garioch, of Old Meldrum. When the Disruption took place, only nine persons left the Establishment, and these all joined

Free Church congregations in the neighbourhood. In the end of 1843, application for the supply of ordinances was made to the Free Presbytery, but they were unable to comply.

"Little more was done for Methlic for a considerable time, but in July, 1846, Francis Main . . . went to a meeting of Presbytery at Ellon, and with tears besought them to do something for Methlic. The result was, that the Presbytery agreed to give services on each alternate Sabbath, the Presbytery having by this time been increased by the addition of Mr. Garioch, Old Meldrum, and Mr. Moir, of New Machar.

"The first who, in accordance with this resolution, preached in Methlic was the Reverend Mr. Brown, of Cruden, Mr. Philip having by this time been translated to Dunfermline. In the forenoon he preached in a grass field on the south side of the parish to a congregation of 200, and in the afternoon in a grass field, on the north side, to a congregation of about 300. The next who preached was Mr. Moir, of New Machar, to fully as large congregations. At this time Mr. William Grant, merchant in the village, had fitted up a hall for his own convenience; but also as a place where public meetings might be held. It was rumoured that Mr. Grant would be willing to let the hall for £10 per annum. I consulted with Mr. Moir about the propriety of taking it, on condition that the Presbytery would give occasional help in the way of supply. Next day I went down and spoke to Mr. Grant about it, when he said that if we were willing to give £10 he would provide seats and let us have it. The bargain was made; and here I would say, and would like to have it recorded, that Mr. and Mrs. Grant, although members of the Established Church, were most kind and obliging, and at considerable inconvenience lodged our probationers for more than two years, when no other house sufficient could be had in the parish. We entered the hall on the 23rd August, 1846, and had it filled to the door every Sabbath.

"We then commenced a Sabbath school. With the exception of the minister's class, there was no such thing in the parish. But no sooner had we set one agoing than the Established Church had one begun alongside of it.

"Towards the end of the same year we had two lectures on

the difference between the Free and the Established Churches. They were well attended, and numbers gave in their adherence, though not a few went back afterwards.

"Our first probationer was the Rev. Mr. Duncan, a good minister in every sense of the word; one who, if spared, would have left his mark. After a while he was settled at Gartly, and preached only four Sabbaths, when he was laid aside by sickness, and did not live long after. After this our pulpit was generally supplied by probationers or students from Aberdeen, and very frequently by Mr. Alexander Laing, an elder in Aberdeen, whose services were very much prized.

"On the first day of the year 1847 Mr. John Brown, Mr. James Davidson, Gowanwell, and Mr. John Burnett, watchmaker, Tarves, were appointed by the congregation to apply to the Earl of Aberdeen for a site for a church. In due time John Burnett and I went and presented to his lordship a petition to this effect, signed by between 200 and 300 adherents. His lordship frankly said that we would get a site, after he had looked over the names to see where the parties signing were located, as he wanted to give also a croft large enough to keep two cows and a pony. On this assurance we busied ourselves raising funds for the building of a church. But April had now arrived, and we had heard nothing about the site. I thought of writing his lordship, then in London, about the promised site, which I did, and in three or four days after I got a note from his factor, saying that he would meet us on a certain day to arrange about the site. We met in due course. The first site he offered us was two miles from the Parish Church, and within two miles of the U.P. Church of Savoch. This we refused. He then offered us one a mile and three-quarters from the parish church. This we also refused, as not at all centrical, and as we had mentioned in our petition to his lordship that we desired a site in or not far from the village. Some time after the factor wrote to us that he would try again to satisfy us. According to appointment, we met with him, when he offered us the site on which the church is now built, less rather than half-a-mile from the parish church. Plans and specifications for our church were prepared by Mr. James Henderson, Aber-

deen. The building went on as quickly as possible, and on the 6th of August, 1848, it was opened by Professor M'Laggan, Free Church College, Aberdeen. The collection on that occasion amounted to £23.

"Having thus got the church erected, our next object was the providing of a manse, as there was no convenient house for a minister to live in. We applied to the factor to make out our lease, as we might proceed at once to build part of a manse. He sent word to the local land-surveyor to draw a plan of the piece of ground on which the church was built, including as much more as would be half-an-acre. Immediately to the south of the church lay a bog, and it came out that this was to be included in the half-acre, and was to be the site for the manse. On hearing this I went into Aberdeen, a distance of 24 miles, called on the factor, and said I had come to see about a site for the manse. He took out the plan prepared, and showed me the place. I said, 'It would not do; we would never build in such a place; we would like it on the New Deer Road, opposite the church.' He said he would come out and look at the ground again. But I said I would not meet any more with him, as there was little likelihood of getting things right; that I had travelled so much already, hither and thither, that I would put the case into the hands of the Presbytery. I asked him whether he would be willing to meet with a deputation from the Presbytery in the matter. He said he would. The Presbytery met at Old Meldrum, and I went to it, and stated our case, asking them to appoint a committee of their number to wait on the factor. This they did, appointing the Rev. Mr. Archibald of Udny, with Mr. Manson of Kilblean, and Mr. Harvey of Tillygrieg. In pursuance of this resolution of the Presbytery, Rev. Mr. Archibald called on the factor, at his office in Aberdeen, to arrange regarding the time when he would meet the deputation from the Presbytery at Methlic. He said he would not go out to Methlic, he had given them a site for a manse, and if they would not accept it they would get no other.

"When we were made acquainted with this decision of the factor, we resolved to have a congregational meeting; and such meeting was duly held, when it was unanimously agreed that

the whole proceedings in the case should be laid before the Earl of Aberdeen. This having been done by letter, a day was appointed for meeting his lordship. I went. His first remark was to this effect: 'You seem to think that my factor, Mr. ——, has been dealing deceitfully by you.' I answered, 'We don't say that; we only say that he does not see the matter in the proper light.' His lordship said, '—— says he cannot give you a site any other way, because the New Deer Road passes between the church and the site you want.' I answered his lordship that his factor's case was worse, for he was putting a burn as well as a road between the church and the manse on his site; and I took my staff and drew the plan in either case on the carpet, when his lordship said, 'Oh, I see it now! It is long since I have been in that place, but I remember it now. You will have your site where you please. I wish to do as well to you Free Church people as to the others. You will get the site you want, and as much land, and inland, too, mind that, as will keep two cows and a pony.' After this, when building office houses in connection with the manse and croft, I asked the factor for slates, and without a word we got slates to the value of £15. So much for the kindness and liberality of Lord Aberdeen. Few landlords acted as he did, and it may be added that his successors have been equally kind and considerate."*

Such was the generous treatment which the people received at the hands of a former opponent. Unfortunately, there were too many lesser men, who acted in a far different spirit. Thus at Humbie, East Lothian, Mr. Dodds states: "We had very great difficulty in procuring a site for a church; all the heritors, and most of the farmers, being hostile to our cause. At length, through the kind intervention of George Buchan, Esq. of Kelloe, his brother, Sir John Buchan, the proprietor of Upper Keith, consented to give us a site on his property." The farm, however, was in the hands of the trustees of a deceased farmer, and Mr. ——, who had the practical management, "opposed us in every way, and nearly prevented our getting the

* Disr. Mss. xxxviii. pp. 2-8, statement by Mr. John Brown, elder, Cairnorrie.

site we wanted. It was only through the solicitations of Mr. Cadell, of Cockenzie, who had considerable influence with him, that Mr. —— at last withdrew his opposition." "In this way," Mr. Dodds adds, "we got a site for a church, against the judgment and wish both of the proprietor of the ground and the person who exercised the rights and authority of tenant, a case perhaps unparalleled in the Free Church." *

At Flisk, "many fruitless attempts were made to get a site for our church. We thought of one in the village of Luthrie, which was to be sold by public roup. But the minister's sister had secretly instructed the man of business to secure it for her at any price. In our desire to get it we ran up the price far beyond its real value, and then left it to her. . . . In a way we little expected a site was procured, and probably a more suitable one than any that could have been selected. Mr. Boyd, wright, Brunton, the only remaining elder in the parish of Creich, joined us, and as he had a small stripe of land close by the very spot on which it had once been contemplated to build the parish church, he disposed of it, both for church and manse. These seem little things, but they were great providences to us." †

Sometimes the people were in straits, and thankfully accepted of sites on which it was difficult to get a church of any kind built. At Ardrossan, the Earl of Eglinton, a kindly and popular nobleman, on being applied to by Dr. Landsborough, met his request by a curt refusal. In the neighbouring village of Saltcoats, however, a small piece of ground was heard of, belonging to Dr. Dow, of Greenock, with a small house on it, much dilapidated. There was some doubt as to whether the space would be sufficient. Dr. Landsborough made an application for it to Dr. Dow, and that venerable and benevolent gentleman, as he states, "immediately wrote to me, that for the sake of the gude auld Kirk, and for the sake of the good old man, his father, who had long been a minister of that Kirk,‡ he would be delighted to give the ground

* Disr. Mss. xxxiii. pp. 5-8. † Disr. Mss. xxxvii. p. 11.

‡ "The kind-hearted doctor, who is above ninety years of age, took a right view of the matter, in thinking that though for conscience' sake we have given up the temporalities, we have not left the beloved Church of our fathers."—*Witness*, 2nd March, 1844, Dr. Landsborough.

as a free gift, and would be happy to learn that it was large enough. The materials of the old house also were kindly offered. A plan and measurement of the ground having been sent to Mr. Cousin, architect, Edinburgh, he said that there would be room for a church, but that a special plan would be necessary."* This having been furnished by Mr. Cousin, a handsome church was built, and opened by Dr. Brown, of Glasgow, in January, 1844. It was seated for seven hundred, and the whole sittings were at once let. The attendance was afterwards affected, to some extent, by the opening of two Free Churches in the neighbourhood—at Stevenston and Ardrossan.

The case of Dr. Simpson at Kintore was more trying. "Much difficulty was experienced in procuring a site for the Free Church here. Our application to the late Earl of Kintore, on whose ground it was most desirable to have our place of worship erected, met with a refusal. In consequence of this we were obliged to erect it in a swampy situation on the property of Mr. William Smith, merchant, within flood-mark of the Don, which circumstance has proved the source of very great inconvenience and discomfort. Owing to the extreme softness of the foundation, thin brick walls were built on a basement of stone, and these being found incapable of sustaining a slated roof, felt was resorted to, which has proved an insufficient covering. Our case in this respect is rather singular, for when the river overflows, the water finds its way to a considerable depth into the under building, while, during a shower, the rain has often come down upon us overhead in many places. This has been no slight trial, but we have now [1847] the prospect of relief, as the guardians of Lord Kintore have granted an eligible site in the most handsome manner."†

There were parishes in which it was only in consequence of some remarkable conjunction of circumstances that sites were obtained. At Forgandenny, the difficulties threatened to prove insurmountable. "While we were in our thatched cottage," Mr. Drummond writes, "a note was sent to me from the lady of one of the leading heritors, to ask if I and my adhering

* Disr. Mss. xxxix. p. 5.

† Parker Mss., Paper by Dr. Simpson, p. 5.

people would be content with a site at the Path of Condie, if such a site could be obtained. Now, the Path of Condie lies fully five miles from the bulk of our people, and in the highest part of the Ochils. It was utterly impossible that we could accept of such an offer. It was as much as to say that there could be no Free Church here, and that we must abandon all hope of remaining in the parish. Besides, as she added in her note, she was not sure whether her husband would be able to secure ground for us there. Indeed, a United Presbyterian Chapel existed in that elevated region already, so that there was no room for us. . . . We had just begun to consider whether it were possible to obtain sites for church and manse, and we had made two applications to the heritors, whose ground was in all respects the most suitable. We knew well that it would be utterly hopeless to approach the other two. Both of these applications were indignantly rejected. In the meantime, we had some slight hope that we might secure a portion of a liferent property, which would perfectly suit our purpose. The liferenter having previously fallen into pecuniary difficulties, had sold his right to a party in Perth, who was then in possession of it.

"That property had an interesting history. When the last holder, who succeeded to his grandfather, took possession of it, the proprietor, to whom it was to lapse at his death, disputed his title to it, and accordingly raised an action against him before both the Sheriff-Substitute and Sheriff of Perth, and lost in both cases. When this heritor, however, learned that we were looking after a part of it, he determined, if possible, to get hold of the whole property. With that view he carried the question to the Court of Session, and the day was actually fixed by the Supreme Court for trying the case. But in the meantime, —— happened to be on a visit to the said proprietor, who showed him the papers connected with the business; —— advised him to proceed no farther, for, said he, the Court is sure to decide against you. Disappointed in this direction, his next plan was to buy up the liferent. Accordingly, he actually went to the holder's man of business in Perth, with the intention of purchasing it. But it so happened that a friend of ours preceded

him, and having concluded a bargain for part of the land in our favour, was coming down stairs from the agent's office, when he met the said heritor going up on his fruitless errand." *

At Peebles, the site on which the church is built "belonged to nine different proprietors, all either indifferent or hostile to the Church. Yet, to the amazement of not a few, every difficulty yielded to the indefatigable perseverance and consummate prudence of the Free Church Committee in their negotiations with the proprietors of the ground. This was all the more remarkable, seeing that it was the very spot which the Relief congregation earnestly desired, and strove, without success, to obtain, . . . some fifteen or twenty years before." †

In not a few of these cases much of the burden and anxiety fell on the minister.

"Peculiar difficulties occurred in connection with the Free Church cause in Roslin. The landed proprietors were all hostile, and ground for building could not be obtained from any of them. The elders were despondent, and knew not what to do. In these circumstances, Mr. Brown was constrained, entirely on his own responsibility, to purchase an old house in Roslin village, in order to get the garden as a site for a Free Church. The old house was repaired and used for some years as a schoolhouse." ‡

At Girthon, Mr. Jeffrey's "greatest anxiety during the five months of his last illness was about a site for the church. . . . It appears marvellous, on looking back twenty years, to comprehend the hatred evinced by the Established party against the Free Church, and in Girthon, every kind of petty scheme of annoyance was resorted to to prevent a site being got. I do not know how many sites were fixed on, and when almost everything was arranged, objections were raised against the work proceeding. All this lay most heavily on Mr. Jeffrey's head during his illness, and he was not aware of the site being finally obtained till about an hour before his death. Mr. Pearson, one of his elders, told him of it. He was very thank-

* Disr. Mss. liii. pp. 12-13.

† Disr. Mss. xii. p. 6.

‡ Parker Mss., Presb. of Dalkeith, Rev. D. Brown, p. 1.

ful, and prayed for a blessing to rest upon the church about to be erected." *

These extracts will show the obstacles which had in many cases to be overcome; but even after sites had been obtained the difficulties were often far from being ended. It not unfrequently happened that the opposition of landlords and tenants showed itself in refusing the usual facilities for obtaining building materials, and there were districts in which this proved a very serious hindrance.

At one time it was thought that a site for a church would not be obtained in Madderty, Perthshire—"But at last the people succeeded in procuring a piece of moor-ground from a small proprietor, having been refused a site on another property on which it would have been most suitable and central for the scattered population. On the same property on which a site was refused there was a quarry, from which the people could not be allowed to take stones for the building of the church, and they were consequently under the necessity of bringing all the stones from a place ten miles distant. All the landed proprietors in the parish were hostile to the principles of the Free Church." †

The greatest difficulty in some cases was sand. When the church was commenced at Kelty, for the parishes of Cleish and Beath, "none of the neighbouring proprietors would allow us to take sand from the pits on their property, so that the work was put a stop to, till the wife of the proprietor of Gairney Bank, parish of Kinross, in the absence of her husband, ventured to send us several cart-loads of sand, which were afterwards repeated with his consent. Previous to this, however, permission had been obtained to dig sand from the side of a public road. A man was sent, accordingly, to procure the necessary supply, and already a considerable quantity had been thrown out, and was lying on the roadside ready to be wheeled away next morning. But during the night a man, who possessed a small property in the neighbourhood of the spot, . . . filled up the hole with the sand, alternating each

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Kirkcudbright.
† Disr. Mss. xxv. p. 4.

spadeful with a spadeful of earth, thus rendering it useless for the purpose." *

At Portpatrick, they had to bring their supply from a greater distance. "The Free Church congregation at the time of the Disruption were exposed to considerable hardship from the refusal of sites. The proprietor of the soil was keenly opposed to the movement, and did all in his power to put it down. Sand for building required to be brought all the way from Brodick Bay, in Arran." †

At Forgandenny, the circumstances that occurred called forth an unusual amount of feeling. "Having fixed upon a suitable spot for the church, we instantly made preparations for building, as we were anxious to have the congregation safely under roof before winter should come. A plan was got and approved of. Estimates for the different departments of the work were accepted. And now to us a very important question arose—where was the needful *sand* to be got? There was no difficulty about *stones*, for the contracting masons had a quarry on lease in the neighbourhood, from which they could take as much building material, unchallenged, as they might require. But the *sand*—where could we look for it?

"We were aware that sand of the best kind had for a long time been taken from a bank in the bed of the River Earn. We resolved therefore to supply ourselves with what we might require from that quarter, not dreaming that opposition would be offered on the part of any one. Accordingly, carts were sent down to bring up a first supply, but on the servants returning for a second they were served with an interdict, at the instance of a neighbouring proprietor, and were obliged to come back empty. They were summoned to appear before the Sheriff on a charge of trespass and theft. This looked a very serious case. Still we were convinced that we had a right to take as much sand as we needed from that spot. Six men, all of excellent character, informed us that they had driven it, unhindered, one for sixty years, two for more than fifty, and the rest for upwards of forty-five years, and that they were willing to attend the Sheriff Court and give evidence upon oath to that effect. They did so, and

* Disr. Mss. xii. p. 3. † Parker Mss., Presb. of Stranraer.

thus the Sheriff had no alternative but to declare from the bench that the servants had committed no trespass, seeing that the public had a prescriptive right to take sand for building and other purposes from the bed of the Earn. And yet he most unwarrantably saddled the innocent men with the expenses of the process.

"It so happened, however, that a gentleman in Edinburgh, who had long been in the habit of frequenting Pitkaithly Wells for two or three months in the year, and who, therefore, felt some interest in what transpired in our county, read the account of the decision in a Perth newspaper which he was wont to receive. He felt for the servants, and was shocked to learn that any expenses were laid upon them. I had never met with that benevolent individual before, and had had no previous correspondence with him. The expenses had been already paid by us, but he sent me an order for the amount, to be handed to the servants, which they on the following Sabbath put into the plate to aid in building the church. We had no further trouble about the sand." *

In the midst of these difficulties there were cases in which the most effective help came from the female members of the church. At Old Meldrum, Aberdeenshire, the site was obtained in a way well deserving of notice. A lady, Mrs. Smith, had a small piece of ground very near Old Meldrum, where she came to reside. Formerly she had lived in Aberdeen, and while there had attended a meeting of Synod, in which the Church question was discussed, and at which Mr. Garioch, of Old Meldrum, had taken part in the debate. She had formerly been opposed to the principles of the Evangelical majority; but the effect of that discussion was an entire change of her views, and a firm resolution to advance the cause which hitherto she had opposed. Along with her husband, she removed to Old Meldrum, and occupied one of the houses that belonged to her. One day, in the course of his visitation, Mr. Garioch called at the house, and as he left, Mrs. Smith said to him, "I see now the likelihood of a speedy disruption in

* Disr. Mss. liii. pp. 14-16.

the Church, and when that takes place, if you will accept of a site on my ground for the church which will then be required, I will not only give it with pleasure, but will consider that the favour is done to me in its being accepted." The generous offer was cordially welcomed, and when the time came the church was built on the site thus providentially procured. *

At Penicuik, the ground belonged to Sir George Clerk, who held an important office under Government. He had taken an active part in the Ten Years' Conflict; but after the Disruption, the spirit which he displayed was widely different from that of Lord Aberdeen. On being applied to, he not only refused a site, but when the people had bought for themselves an eligible piece of ground, he interposed, as superior of the barony, to claim the right of pre-emption, and so effectually shut them out. At a subsequent period, when they had purchased a cottage and proposed to enlarge it as a manse, he again successfully interfered to prevent their adding to the comfort of their pastor. These efforts, however, to put down the obnoxious Free Church were not successful. A respectable old woman named Helen Wilson had died leaving part of a cottage and a garden, which were put up for sale by public auction. The purchaser was Charles Cowan, Esq., M.P., who made a present of the garden as a site to the Free Church. The ground was held on lease from Sir George's estate at Penicuik, but as 400 years of the lease had still to run, it was fortunately a good way out of reach. On this piece of ground a church was built. As the little garden, however, was triangular in shape, the church had necessarily to be somewhat similar in form. It was opened in the month of October. "The pulpit was placed behind, near the apex of the triangle, and the seating was necessarily disposed in segments of a circle, the area of the church being somewhat in the form of a fan. The front is about a hundred feet in length, and considering the very awkward shape of the ground, "the effect of the whole is peculiarly pleasing." † Subsequently Sir G. Clerk gave ground for a manse, and ultimately the advantageous site where the present Free Church stands, on reasonable terms.

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Garioch.

† *Witness*. 26th June, 1844, and 16th October, 1844.

A similar case, which obtained a yet greater share of public notice, occurred at Thornhill, a considerable village in the upper part of Dumfriesshire. Most of the ground belongs to the Duke of Buccleuch, whose influence was paramount in the district, and as he had unfortunately taken an attitude of keen hostility to the Free Church, there was great difficulty in obtaining a site. It happened, however, that a poor woman named Janet Fraser, a stocking weaver, had a small property, consisting of two cottages and a plot of ground, the whole yielding a rent of about £6 a-year. Thirty years before she had formed a resolution to dedicate this property in some way to the cause of God, and when the Free Church congregation, finding themselves in difficulties, asked whether she would sell it, she intimated her purpose to hand it over as a free gift. Some delay occurred, as there was another site which the congregation would have preferred, and the poor woman spent the interval in some anxiety, the idea having taken possession of her mind that if the site were refused it would be a token that the Lord had cast out her gift. "In the meantime, there came a person who was understood to act for the Duke of Buccleuch, and offered to treat for the purchase of the ground. He began by offering £25, but presently advanced to £50. Janet cut him short by her noble reply—she had devoted it to her Maker, and she would not take £500, no nor all the dukedom of Queensberry for her ground, under a prohibition to give it to the Almighty. It was finally arranged that she should receive a small rent for it during her life, and that on her death it should become the property of the congregation. Upon the ground thus bestowed the Free Church of Thornhill has been erected. It has one rather significant peculiarity. The south wall has a deforming bend, which interferes with the symmetry of an otherwise goodly edifice. Eighteen inches more of ground would have made the wall straight. But these eighteen inches would have encroached on the Duke's march [boundary], and so the wall is crooked."

When a deputation from the Free Church visited America, this story of Janet Fraser seems greatly to have taken the fancy of our Transatlantic friends. At the meetings, Dr. Burns says: "We always placed the Principal (Cunningham) in the

foreground, as the vigorous and successful exponent of Acts of Parliament and Claims of Right. But he generally concluded when he paid a tribute to worthy Janet Fraser and the 'crook in the wa'.' On such occasions the starched features of our dear American friends were pleasantly relaxed into something not unlike a laugh, by the exciting contrast between the outgoings of a massive intellect and the playings of fancy around the circle of a good story." *

Dr. Cunningham himself, when addressing the Assembly on his return, adverted to the topic. "Perhaps no one in this country has excited a greater degree of sympathy in America than Janet Fraser. They were acquainted with her case, they knew the trials to which she had been subjected, and I have brought home many expressions of cordial regard and sympathy for her. I hold in my hands a pair of silver spectacles, the gift of a Scotchwoman in New York, who desired me to send them to Janet."

At Carmylie, Forfarshire, Mrs. Gardyne, a member of the congregation, attempted to render a similar service, but unfortunately it cost her the loss of the property which she believed was hers in liferent. The narrative, by Dr. Wilson, of Dundee, then of Carmylie, strikingly brings out the difficulties of the time.

"The factor of Lord Panmure offered a site at the extreme western boundary of the parish, which was refused as ineligible, being so remote from the great bulk of the congregation. During the summer of 1843, the congregation worshipped in the open air at the small hamlet of Milton. An aged widow, Mrs. Gardyne, a member of the congregation, who supposed she had a liferent interest in the cottage and garden she occupied at Milton, offered to the congregation a portion of her garden on which to erect a temporary building for worship. The congregation gladly availed themselves of this offer, and erected, accordingly, a wooden church, roofed with felt, which was opened for worship on the first Sabbath of October, 1843. In this building the congregation, numbering from 300 to 400, worshipped with great comfort till Whitsunday, 1844.

* Life of Dr. Burns, p. 179.

At this date Mrs. Gardyne was evicted from her cottage, and obliged to take refuge with her son in Arbroath, with whom she lived thereafter, till her death; and the congregation, by interdict granted by the Sheriff of the county, was prohibited from again entering the church which they had built. During the summer of 1844, as in the summer of the previous year, they worshipped in the open air by the wayside. Before the winter set in they procured a canvas tent, and in that they worshipped during the winter of 1844-45, when the weather was quiet. There was no sort of shelter from the wind in the locality, and in stormy weather the tent could not be erected. In stormy weather, therefore, they worshipped in the barn at Mains of Carmylie, the use of which was kindly granted by Mr. James Kydd, farmer at Mains, an elder of the congregation. . . . It is worth while to record one of those humourous hits to which the circumstances of the congregation gave rise. A farmer, James Gardyne, a member of the Free Church, was walking home from Arbroath on the market-day, Saturday, and overtook by the road a brother farmer, Henry Suttie, a member of the Established Church, who was riding home. Henry's horse had taken an obstinate fit, and refused, in spite of flogging and spurring, to move onwards. 'Oo, Henry, man,' said James in passing, 'what's the matter wi' your horse? Has onybody put an *interdict* upon him?' Henry had been particularly jubilant on the subject of the interdict served upon the Free Church.

"In the spring of 1845, frequent consultations were held among the office-bearers as to what should be done. There seemed to be no prospect of relief from the hardships under which the congregation were suffering, and although none of the members had been shaken in their allegiance through the hardships to which they were exposed, it was clearly their duty, if possible, to alleviate these hardships. It is proper to record, however, to the praise of a bountiful Providence, that though the congregation often sat in the tent at worship on winter days with their feet resting upon ice, none of them, so far as is known, suffered in health. Two neighbouring congregations, those of Arbirlot and Panbride, to whom a site had also been

refused by Lord Panmure, following the example of the congregation at Carmylie, had, in the summer of 1843, erected wooden churches after the model of the one at Carmylie, and Lord Panmure had not interfered with their occupancy of them. These churches were built on the lands of farmers who had a lease, and could not be evicted, as Mrs. Gardyne had been. The congregation at Carmylie resolved to adopt a similar course, and for the second time to erect a wooden church.

"It is necessary to explain why they did not make the attempt at an earlier date. Those members of the congregation who rented lands on the Panmure estates were of two classes—crofters and farmers. In Carmylie there were a large number of these crofters renting from four to fifteen acres of land. They had no written leases, and were liable to be evicted at the will of the proprietor. In 1843, it happened that the leases of all the farmers in Carmylie expired. During the summer of 1843, all the crofters and farmers who were members of the Free Church were waited upon by the ground-officer, and warned that the only condition on which they would be allowed to retain their premises, was by returning to the Established Church. They were assured that Lord Panmure would not tolerate on his estates any member or adherent of the Free Church. The farmers who applied for a renewal of their leases received the same information from the factor. At Whitsunday, 1844, some of the crofters were evicted as a warning to all the rest, who were informed that they would be allowed to continue in occupancy for another year, to see whether they would not within that time quietly return to the Established Church. It is due to the people who were thus harassed and threatened, to say that not one of them complied with the terms of the proprietor.

"Meantime, during the summer of 1844, a new trial awaited them. In the neighbouring parish of Panbride, Mr. Ireland had held the lease of the farm of Firth, bordering on Carmylie parish. Mr. Ireland had subscribed the Convocation resolutions of 1842, and professed the principles of the Free Church. His lease, like those of the Carmylie farmers, expired in 1843, and, as matter of course, he was subjected to the same test.

He consented to return to the Established Church, and as a reward for his apostasy, had his lease renewed in 1844 on highly advantageous terms. He immediately set to work as an emissary of the proprietor, and waited upon the Free Church farmers of Carmylie to represent to them what an excellent bargain he had made with the factor, having got his lease renewed at a greatly reduced rent, and that if they would only consent to return to the Established Church he was authorised to assure them that their leases would be renewed on equally advantageous terms. Some of the farmers were in greater danger of being shaken by this inducement than by the threats which had previously been thundered against them. It is possible that some of them might have been worn out and induced to yield, but for a providential occurrence which produced a considerable sensation in the district.

"The autumn of 1844 came on, and Mr. Ireland reaped his crop of grain, the first crop under his new lease, and had it all safely lodged in the barn-yard. The Sabbath after such an important operation is finished is regarded by the farmers in the locality as an occasion for peculiar thanksgiving. Mr. Ireland, of course, on that Sabbath went to the parish church, and died there during the celebration of public worship, before he had sold one boll of that crop for which he had paid so dear. This striking and awful occurrence in Providence had the effect of showing the Carmylie farmers how little security the proprietor could give them in the most favourable bargain they could make with him. Perhaps, also, it had its influence on those who had been so sorely trying and oppressing them. At all events, the system of threatening and bribing ceased from that time.

"In 1845, Lord Panmure commenced giving leases to the Free Church farmers. Now, therefore, the congregation were in a position to follow the course which had been adopted at Arbirlot and Panbride. During the summer of that year, therefore, they commenced the erection of a new wooden church, having obtained the permission of the tenant, Mr. James Kydd, the renewal of whose lease had also led to another important amelioration in their circumstances. On the farm

there was an old and a new farm-house. Mr. Kydd occupied the old house and gave the new one for the temporary occupancy of the minister, who was thus, after a banishment of two years, restored to the close neighbourhood of his people, and to his pastoral work among their families. No sooner, however, had they commenced preparations for the erection of a second wooden church, by building a dwarf stone wall for a foundation, than Lord Panmure's factor interposed. He ordered the mason who was engaged at the work immediately to stop, and when the mason answered that he would only stop on the order of those who employed him, the factor had recourse to Mr. Kydd, and informed him that he had no right to permit the erection of such a building, and that unless its progress was immediately arrested, an interdict would be obtained, both against him and the office-bearers of the congregation. Mr. Kydd having consulted with the minister, who now resided in the adjoining house, answered, that of course they would submit to an interdict, but that nothing else would arrest the progress of the building.

"Having heard this conclusive reply, the factor immediately changed his tactics, for neither he nor Lord Panmure was quite prepared to brave the odium of another interdict. He then, on the part of Lord Panmure, made the offer of a site, on very reasonable terms, and on the very spot of ground which the congregation had vainly solicited for the purpose more than two years previously. A missive, conveying the ground to the extent of a Scotch acre for the erection of a church and manse on a lease of ninety-nine years, was drawn up and subscribed on the spot, and the protracted conflict seemed to be now happily ended. The mason was instructed, not, indeed, to suspend operations, but merely to change the locality of them. The ground thus leased was taken possession of on that very day; and as the congregation needed a temporary shelter for the approaching winter, they set to work to erect a wooden church on the site. They were the rather induced to do this, inasmuch as the factor, to their surprise, made it a condition, to them a very welcome one, that they should forthwith remove the wooden church they had built at Milton two years pre-

viously, and from which they had been shut out by interdict. This church, so long locked up, was accordingly transferred to the new and central site which had been granted.

"But a new difficulty occurred before this could be accomplished. The ground for which the missive had been obtained formed part of the farm of Mr. Henry Suttie. On the day after the factor had subscribed the missive, his son was observed riding up to the farm. The congregation suspected no harm, for it might be necessary to negotiate with Mr. Suttie for the transference of the acre of ground, and the compensation to be given him for the loss of it. At the end of the week, however, the object of the visit became apparent, for on Saturday all the office-bearers of the congregation were served with an interdict at the instance of Mr. Suttie. It appeared that while Lord Panmure and his factor were desirous of escaping the odium of an interdict, they had no objection to expose the farmer to it. Building operations were thus again suspended.

"On the Monday after the service of the interdict, however, the minister and two of the elders waited upon Lord Panmure's agent in Forfar, and represented to him that the interdict really lay against his lordship; that he had granted the congregation a site, and was bound to put them in possession of it; and that if it was pleaded that he had no control over Mr. Suttie, and could only put them in possession of the ground with his consent, there was more than one of the crofters in the immediate neighbourhood who would interpose no obstacle in the way of his lordship's granting an acre, which the congregation were quite willing to accept. In these circumstances the agent could scarcely fail to see that the odium of the interdict would still attach to Lord Panmure. He was evidently a good deal perplexed, and asked the minister what could be done. The minister replied, 'It was at the suggestion of the factor that Mr. Suttie applied for this interdict, and if the factor tells him to withdraw it he will be equally obedient.' This was the course actually followed; and on the following Saturday the interdict was withdrawn, and the harassing troubles of the congregation were thus ended."*

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Dundee. Paper by Dr. Wilson.

In contrast to all this hostility, however, there were, in many parts of the country, singular examples of generous liberality among the friends of the Church. At the General Assembly which met five months after the Disruption, Mr. Hamilton, in stating the general amount of contributions, referred to some of these cases as specially deserving of notice. "To this sum must be added the munificent donations in kind which have been contributed to our cause, but which do not appear as cash in our treasurer's books—that is to say, the entire churches which have been built by individuals at their own charges, and freely presented to the Church. Of these we have to record the following—viz., the Dowager Marchioness of Breadalbane gives a church and also a manse at Langton; Mr. Hog, of Newliston, gives a church and manse at Kirkliston; Mr. Campbell, of Monzie, gives a church at Monzie and another at Dalmally; Mrs. Col. Paston and Miss Arthur of Barnslee give a church and manse at Markinch; Miss Ann Trail gives a church at Papa Westra; Mr. Young gives a church at Burntisland; Mr. Johnston and Mr. Lennox, of New York, give £1100 to erect a church at Kirkcudbright; and to these most honourable instances of liberality we have to add the bounty of that distinguished nobleman who, after having proved from first to last the staunch and unflinching advocate of our principles in high places, has given us the satisfaction of seeing him this day in the midst of us an efficient working elder of the Free Church of Scotland. Lord Breadalbane, besides presenting to the Presbytery of Perth the entire stock of larch timber stored in his yards at Perth—being timber of the noblest growth produced in Scotland, and in the most perfect state of seasoning—has given two million of slates from his celebrated quarries in Argyllshire, the value of which alone is not less than £4000 sterling. His lordship has further proposed to confer on the Church the benefit of the right which he enjoys under his patent as Admiral of the West Coast of Scotland to the drift-wood stranded upon its shores. . . . And in addition to all this, Lord Breadalbane is now exercising, in innumerable nameless acts, a liberality and bounty toward the various churches rising within the bounds of his own princely domain which

will promote the vital interests of his people, and root him in their affections to a degree which nothing else could accomplish, and which present an example to the aristocracy of Scotland which it is deeply to be deplored that so few of them have yet shown a disposition to imitate."*

But while the wealthy members of the Church were thus casting their costly gifts into the treasury of the Lord, there was something peculiarly touching in the way in which the poorer classes gave according to their ability, and when money failed them, supplemented their offerings by gratuitous labour. The carriage of materials in many districts is a heavy item of expense, and this was usually done free of charge by the farmers. The working classes had to take other methods, and in the following extracts the reader will find some examples of what was occurring to a great extent in very many of the parishes of Scotland.

At Catrine it is reported: "We found the people assembled for the purpose of collecting funds to build a church." An interdict had been applied for by the Establishment party to turn them out of their *quoad sacra* place of worship. "The spirit that prevailed was most healthful. Three hundred of the young women employed in the mill have undertaken to raise £300, by leaving one shilling a-week of their wages in the hands of their employer for the purpose of building. Before the meeting concluded a hundred and thirty persons had subscribed £450, and I have no doubt that before this month is ended the whole sum required to build a church of 1100 or 1200 sittings will be subscribed."†

At Olrig, in the North, the foundation-stone was laid on the 28th of June by Mr. Mackenzie, the minister, and this having been done, "in the evening after the labours of the day were over the people turned out to gather materials to build the walls. Upwards of 100 men commenced carrying from the sea-shore to the beach large stones, to which there was no access by carts, some of them bearing their burdens on hand-barrows—some bearing them on their backs."‡

* Assembly Proceedings, Glasgow, 1843, p. 111.

† *Monthly Statement*, March, 1844, p. 3. ‡ *Witness*, 12th July, 1843.

At Tobermory, in the Island of Mull, a site was obtained from Mr. Caldwell. Next day, "a number of the people commenced quarrying and blasting stones, others clearing the foundation, under the superintendence of two aged and experienced tradesmen, chosen by the people at a meeting held for arranging matters, and for appointing a committee of management to guide our proceedings, and among other becoming resolutions it was agreed that *no person was to be employed about the work found guilty of taking excess of ardent spirits, or swearing of any kind.* The foundation-stone was laid on the 14th July. The Rev. P. Maclean, our minister, attended, . . . read the 7th chapter of 2 Samuel, and offered up a most impressive prayer in the hearing of the multitude, who united in their Amen. Lime and gravel have been brought to the stance by boatmen, mostly free from freight, as their aid to build the Free Church. Masons are offering a week of their labour gratis; some with horses and carts work to the value of a pound sterling, and poor labourers do work generally six and seven days, to some of whom we are obliged to give meal while serving some of their time, for which they work, in addition to the time subscribed for. Such is the poverty of most of the people that the plan is unavoidably necessary. . . . However, we are resolved to show that what we can do we shall do." *

"At Aberdour, Fifeshire, a beautiful and central site for the Free Church has been procured from Robert Anderson, Esq., . . . and such is the life and energy of the people that every night from 50 to 100 men, after closing their daily labour, are to be seen working with all their might till dark, gratuitously, at the building." †

From a parish in Caithness, a report comes in the month of June: "The people are most impatient to have the church up, and last evening old and young turned out—eighty spades were at work—and in less than half-an-hour the foundation was dug out, and before two hours had elapsed the earth was all disposed of in making up some hollow ground in the neighbourhood. Nothing can exceed the enthusiasm of all parties. We are the first to commence, and I hope in the course of three

* *Monthly Statement*, August, 1843. † *Witness*, 12th August, 1843.

months the roof will be on. The wood for the roof and floor is ordered. Lime and stone we have. The farmers turn out to-morrow to the cartage, and the masons commence on the 26th to the side walls." *

In this way the humbler classes evinced their attachment to the cause which they had at heart. Any one who has stood, as the writer has, in the midst of such a group of workers on these occasions, must have felt what a labour of love it was. They were joyful scenes at the time, and in after days the very fact of the people having themselves put a hand to the work, attached them to the building in a way which no money contributions could have done. Ever afterwards the church was felt to belong personally to themselves.

One of the most remarkable examples of the extent to which the people sometimes carried this feeling—identifying themselves with their church—occurred at Methven, Perthshire.

"Considerably more than a hundred years ago, Mr. Graham, of Balgowan (Lord Lynedoch), was one day passing through the village of Methven, on his return from shooting, when a dog, suddenly rushing out from a house, frightened his horse. Mr. Graham instantly levelled his fowling-piece and shot the dog, at the same time, unfortunately, wounding a child sitting on the door-step. In order to make up matters with the father, he purchased from the laird of Methven about an acre of ground, contiguous to the man's house, and presented it to him, as a *solatium* for the rash act he had committed. On that piece of ground the Free Church is built. When I came to the place, upwards of thirty-one years ago, that child was still alive, upwards of eighty years of age, a member of the Free Church, and she prided herself not a little on the facts above stated. She was then a pauper, and unable to contribute anything for the good cause, but she considered that in the providence of God she had been honoured to do more for the Free Kirk than any one in this quarter, inasmuch as while 'others gae their siller to help to build it, she was shot to get a site for it.'" †

* *Witness*, 28th June, 1843.

† Letter from Mr. M'Leish, of Methven, 22nd January, 1877.

But now, instead of multiplying such details, it may be best to select some examples of parishes in different parts of the country, where the narratives can be given with some degree of fulness, enabling the reader to judge of what was actually going forward, and how building operations were being carried on under difficulties.

The first case is that of Latheron, in the North, where we find Mr. Davidson, after building the four or five churches which he lost at the Disruption, entering once more, with characteristic ardour, into the same congenial work.

"Measures were taken for the immediate erection of a church to accommodate the same number of sitters as the one we had left, viz., about 800, and the management of the whole concern committed to myself. The site, contractor, and materials for building and roofing were got on very reasonable terms; for it so happened, providentially for the Free Church, that a large vessel laden with foreign timber was cast ashore on the coast, and the whole cargo purchased at a low price by a very zealous Free Churchman; and all the churches built that season in the county were supplied with wood of the best quality, at a very cheap rate. The foundation-stone of our church was laid with great solemnity in the beginning of September, and the building was so far finished as to admit of our worshipping in it in the end of December. The people cheerfully gave their labour in quarrying stones and carrying all the materials, so that, when finished, the cost did not exceed £350. Thus the work went on prosperously until brought to a speedy conclusion, for although little obstacles occasionally presented themselves, they were always easily removed, and sometimes in ways rather remarkable.

"At one time six lintels were wanted for the windows, and the man in charge came and told me that they had been trying to get such in the quarry for a week back and had not succeeded, and unless procured without delay the work would be stopped. This was rather serious, as the only quarry where such could be purchased was eighteen miles distant. I therefore asked him to make one trial more, and went with him, but he thought it would be in vain. I said, we must try; so we examined it, and at a particular place I said, 'What if you

should try that, as the bed seems long and narrow.' 'Yes,' he replied; 'but it is so bound that a shot may break it in pieces, but will not move the whole; only, to please you I will try.' So he did. The whole bed was moved to a considerable depth, and next day he told me that it had just furnished the six solid lintels, and neither more or less.

"Another somewhat remarkable occurrence happened a week or two afterwards. We had forgotten to provide freestone spurs for receiving the skews on the gables, and none were to be had nearer than the towns of Thurso or Wick, distant respectively twenty-three and seventeen miles. This would occasion delay; and an attempt was being made to prepare them of common stone, when a large stone resembling freestone was reported as discovered on a hill about a mile distant. A workman was sent to examine it, and found that it was real freestone. It was easily broken up, and conveyed to the building, and out of it the spurs required were all furnished. How or when this block of stone came to be here no one could tell, as the hill was entirely barren, covered with moss and heath, without any trace of the humblest dwelling within half-a-mile of it, and no account of anything of the kind having ever been found in the locality, or, indeed, in the parish before or since. These little incidents struck us very forcibly at the time, and I can hardly omit noticing them as tending to cheer us in the work."*

Beside this example from the far North, we place the case of Westruther, in the South, where difficulties of the most formidable kind had to be overcome. "So hostile," says Mr. Wood, "was the feeling towards the newly-organised Free Church of Scotland, that every one of the heritors of the parish combined to refuse every facility toward the building of a place of worship. Spottiswoode of that ilk, the Earl of Lauderdale, Ker Seymour of Cattleshiels, Lord Blantyre of Wedderlie, Curle of Evelaw, and Home of Bassendean, would, if they could, have prevented us from obtaining a site on which to build. In this matter, however, I had been beforehand with them, and had secured a portion of a feu in the village sufficient for the pur-

* Parker Mss., Pres. of Caithness. Paper by Mr. Davidson, pp. 5, 6.

pose, and the missive was signed before any one knew anything about it. Fortunate it was that I had succeeded in this, for every attempt was made to prevent our getting possession. The disposition had been drawn up, and the lawyer from Dunse had fixed a day for its being executed, when the proprietor informed us that he had changed his mind, and did not intend to sell. He was immediately told that if he did not execute the disposition an action would be raised to compel him, and the costs paid out of the price of the land; and as he found on inquiry that he was bound by his missive, he consented with a sufficiently bad grace to sign the deed, on which we immediately took infeftment.

"Our site was thus secured, but every quarry and every sand-pit in the neighbourhood was closed against us. Wood we could procure, and lime; but the other necessaries for building were not within our reach. In these circumstances, I applied to one whom I am proud to call my friend, the late James Cunningham, of Coldstream, then at Greenlaw. Few men have more cheerfully hazarded all for the principles which they held than he did. At the time when I became acquainted with him, he was in the employment of the county as architect, surveyor of roads, &c. He was naturally inclined towards Liberal sentiments, which made him give some attention to the progress of the conflict that ended in the Disruption, and it was not long before he recognised the higher and holier principles involved in it. Then he heartily cast in his lot with the Evangelical party. No one who knows how county business is managed, especially in such a county as Berwickshire, will be surprised to learn that Mr. Cunningham was looked on coldly because of his Liberal sentiments; that his leaving the Established Church at the Disruption was considered to be an offence, and his giving counsel to me regarding the building of a Free Church, when the land-owners had resolved that, if they could help it, no Free Church should be erected at Westruther, was held to be a dereliction of duty to his employers. All this time, frankly, freely, generously he gave his valuable assistance, and I never heard a word drop from his lips which indicated the slightest reluctance to expose himself to peril, which he must very well have known was hanging over his head. . . .

"But, to return to my narrative, I laid all my difficulties before my counsellor—no stone, no sand; how are we to build the church? 'We must not be beat,' said he; 'if we cannot build of stone, we'll build of wood.' And, accordingly, he drew out a plan for such a structure. It was to consist of wooden pillars resting on stone sockets, for we had the means of securing a sufficient number of stones for *this* purpose, and the space between the pillars was to be filled up with planking. With this I returned home, well-pleased to find that we would not be obliged to succumb. But matters turned out somewhat better than we expected. A few days after this, and before any steps had been taken toward the erection, I was told, late in the evening, that a man wanted to speak to me, who would not give his name. On being shown into my study, he divested himself of wrappers which had hitherto concealed his identity, and I recognised the familiar face of a feuar in the village. 'Mr. Wood,' said he, 'I hear that ye're gaun to be sair pit till't to get yer kirk built, and though I havena joined ye, yet I like ill to see ye beat. I dinna ken about stanes, but I think I can help ye to sand. My feu, ye ken, lies next to your bit land. Noo, I hear ye canna get sand, and I'm bound to tell ye that there's a vein of extraordinary fine building sand in my ground, and I mak nae doot it gangs through to yours. Ye hae only to dig, and ye'il find plenty o' sand. But be sure ye dinna let on that I tell't ye, for I dinna want to hae onybody's ill-will on my head.' Having said his say, he muffled himself up again so as not to be recognised, and took his departure. The vein of sand was found exactly as had been described, and the discovery in some degree altered our plan. We began to collect all the stones to be found in the neighbourhood. A friendly farmer carted down for us all that were lying at the corners of his fields, and, if I recollect right, was threatened for doing so. In the end we found ourselves able to build a low wall a foot and a-half above the ground, into which the stone sockets were built which supported the wooden pillars; while the interval between the pillars was filled up with a wall four inches thick, built of small stones and mortar, instead of the planking which had been at first proposed. The roof, as the fashion was in Disruption days, was

made of tarred canvas, and indeed our walls would not have borne a heavier fabric. Our church lasted for nine or ten years, by which time the hostility to the Free Church had ceased to manifest itself in the same outrageous fashion, and the temporary building was replaced by a solid and comfortable structure of stone, which was formally opened on the 1st of November, 1854."*

A third example we take from Muthill, Perthshire, in one of the central districts of Scotland. It will show with what indomitable perseverance the difficulties of many country parishes were met and overcome. Mr. Douglas, one of the licensed probationers of the Church, had been appointed to serve there for a time, and tells how he found the people in a state of discouragement. "On calling a meeting the evening after I arrived, I found them warm in the cause, but labouring under the impression that they would never be able to build a church nor to get a minister for themselves. . . . They had collected up to the second week of June only £29 for the building and Sustentation Fund. My first object was to assure them that they must have both a church of their own and a settled minister among them, and accordingly we made arrangements for working vigorously during a collecting week to raise more funds for building. The week came and passed, and the sum total of the collection was only £11. This was a proof that the fear of having no church of their own was chilling and damping all their efforts. . . .

"It was no easy matter to get this fear altogether removed, for as the people began to be convinced of the willingness of the church at large to help them, they began to see and to feel difficulties which the church had not the power to remove. No site could be obtained—no stones—no sand for building could be had on any terms. We had held many meetings, to which all friendly parties were freely admitted. There was nominally a committee, but it consisted of all who chose to come and offer advice. We had thus every engine at work. Some were appointed to inquire for a site, some for stones, some for building sand, and most earnestly did they fulfil their tasks. But all

* Disr. Mss. l. pp. 37-41.

returned with the same answer—no site, stones, or sand could be obtained for love or money. There were some feus for sale in the village, but there were legal difficulties connected with every one of them, which we saw no prospect of removing. The factor, who had the disposal of the land all around, was applied to by as influential a deputation as we could muster. That deputation waited on" him, "and tried all possible means to obtain what we needed, but the stern reply was, *no site, no stones, no sand.* There was plenty at our very doors, and we offered payment, but nothing could we get.*

"Hitherto all was dark. Some were despairing, many were beginning to consider what congregation in the neighbourhood they should join—not one thought of going back, not one left us. Meanwhile, I had been reappointed to serve some time longer in the Presbytery, and still to reside in Muthill. But there was less prospect than ever of getting a church, and consequently of forming a permanent congregation. However, our efforts were still continued. We were persecuted, but not forsaken; we were perplexed, but not in despair. At last light began to dawn. An old man in the village offered to give us a part of his garden as a site, and as there was no proper entry, he agreed to let us a small house in front, part of which might be removed to form an entry. We took the whole on a lease for fifty years, the longest period he would agree to, and engaged to pay £4, 8s. as rent.

"Thus, then, we had got a site, but not a stone could be had to build on it, neither could we get sand. Here we met with a most striking providence. Two men, masons, whom we had appointed to scour the country far and wide in search of building sand, were on their way to a place six miles off, where they thought they might get it. In crossing along they saw a huge heap of stones in a field, almost hidden by young trees. They went aside to look at them, and though they were great coarse

* "It is but justice, however, to add, that we afterwards got both stones and sand without payment for building the schoolhouse, by applying *directly* to Lord Willoughby, the proprietor of the surrounding lands. Unfortunately, he was in Italy when we were in our difficulties about the church.

boulders of the most unpromising kind, the men thought they would do for building, provided they could be obtained. Being satisfied of this, they went directly to the proprietor and stated the case. He received them most kindly, and gave them a full free grant of the whole heap. It contained 700 or 800 cart-loads, which had been dug out of the land and heaped up there ten years before. The place was four miles distant from the site, but no toll to pay for cartage. The proprietor who thus dealt so kindly toward us was Mr. Gillespie Graham, of Orchill.

"The two men were overjoyed. They went next to Braco Castle, and waited on Mr. G. D. Stewart. He gave them at once a free grant of as much sand as they might need. They came back rejoicing. Our way so far was now plain; we had a site, and stones, and sand for building, but we had little or no money. We had a distant promise of help from the Building Committee in Edinburgh, but we had only £35 in hand to go on with, and the month of July was already past.

"We determined, however, to proceed. We already began to say to one another, surely the Lord is preparing our way, and we trusted that as He had now removed so many strange and apparently insurmountable obstacles, He would in due time enable us to surmount all that might meet us. We felt that what had been accomplished on our behalf was a call to go on in faith. Accordingly, plans were sketched out for the proposed building, and one for 676 sittings, with galleries, was approved of. Specifications for the walls were written out, and a contract taken for building them. Some in the congregation disapproved of this step. They thought it rash—nay, madness, to commence building a church for nearly 700 persons, with only £35 in hand, and without knowing where we are to get another penny. It certainly did seem rashness, but the reasons which moved us to attempt building so large a church with such small funds in hand could not be understood except by those who were on the spot at the time, and acquainted with the general state of feeling among the people. We acted, as we thought, for the best. We could count on all the cartage of materials free, and we thought that our £35 would meet some incidental expenses till the walls

would be finished, and then we could go to the people and ask more money. We went even further—we bought wood for roof and floors, and took contracts for finishing the whole outer shell of the church without ever attempting to raise more money.

"We were in this state, the work going on in the month of November. The Assembly met in Glasgow, . . . and I shall never forget the feelings awakened within me when in giving in one of the reports, Dr. Chalmers spoke of the pernicious madness of a congregation in the North, who proposed to build a church for 700, with less than £40 in their subscription books. Perhaps he alluded to some other, but I felt that it could be no other than my own poor congregation (I had been ordained to the pastoral charge of it in September). I felt crushed by the expression, but was relieved a good deal when the Rev. Dr. said he would name no names.

"On my return from the Assembly, I found the work still going on. The roof was up and the slates ready to put on. It was high time to get more cash. We were already in debt for upwards of £200, and our £35 was all spent. We resolved to try another subscription, although the two previous trials had yielded only £35. The great bulk of the people had said they would subscribe no more till they saw a church built; not a very likely way, certainly, to get a church, but such was their determination, and so strong, that we saw it vain to attempt overcoming it. But we could now go to the people and meet them on their own ground—the church was built. Accordingly, the collectors were furnished with books, a week appointed for collecting, an appeal made to the people on the Sabbath, and it was well answered. In less than a week we had collected about £100. This surprised everybody—the people were so poor. However, this sum was not enough. Another effort must be made. A day was fixed, about a month thereafter, for opening the church, which was as yet only a mere shell, fitted up with temporary benches on the ground floor. The day was stormy, but £57 was collected at the church door, and the highest offering was £1 note. This astonished every one, and did more to confound our adversaries than anything that had yet happened. About the same time

we got £169 from the General Building Fund. Thus we were out of debt, all things paid for, and £80 in the bank.

"We now saw our way more clearly. The people were in better spirits. They saw more what they could do. Yet every one felt disposed to admire the wonderful providence by which our matters had hitherto been overruled.

"In the spring of 1844 we behoved to make further efforts. The church was not half-finished. Contracts were taken for finishing it. Another subscription was raised in May, 1844, and when the work was finished we had another opening collection in November, which produced £26. In that month the seats were allocated, and the congregation requested to contribute whatever they felt able as entry-money for the seats. This produced nearly £30. Still there was debt, and some work to do in fittings and painting, &c. &c. Another subscription was raised to meet these demands, and exceeded them. Thus every farthing of debt was paid, and a balance over." *

In the midst of these struggles, however, there was one favourable circumstance which should not be forgotten—the low rate of building materials and wages in 1843. If the price had been what it soon afterwards became, it would have been hard, even with all the self-denial of the Church's friends, to have contended with the difficulties of such an undertaking. But in the providence of God it was so ordered that there was little demand for building operations in the country, except the building of these churches.

"Many remarked," Dr. Lorimer, of Glasgow, states, "the moderate cost of building in that year. It was commonly said that the same buildings a few years later would have cost one-third more." †

In 1845, Mr. Earle Monteith, in giving in the report on the New College, mentioned that, "from circumstances which are too well known to require illustration, the rate of wages and the price of materials have so much increased, that although when the estimates were made out it would have been built for £20,000, we have learned from Mr. Playfair that if it is to be

* Disr. Mss. viii. pp. 3-9. † Parker Mss., Presb. of Glasgow.

built now, there will be 25 per cent. of an increase on the estimates, and that which will now cost £25,000 might have been built last year (1844) at a cost of £20,000."*

Even in 1844 one of the Glasgow newspapers states: "We are informed that the advance in the price of American timber within the last twelvemonths has been nearly 50 per cent." †

Thus rapidly were the prices going up. It was surely one of the providential circumstances connected with the Disruption that at a time when 700 churches had to be erected the building trades had less employment of any other kind than had been known for a long course of years, and that both wages and the price of building materials had sunk to a point which they have not often reached.

There is a deeply-seated instinct of the Scottish national character which occasionally came into view—the desire, amidst the activities of the present, to keep hold of the memories of the past.

Sometimes it appeared in connection with trivial circumstances. The old parish church of Stevenston dated back to Roman Catholic times, and when a new church was erected, the old weather-cock had been given to Major Martin, who made a present of it to Mr. Landsborough. It had been fixed in one of the outhouses of the manse, but at the flitting after the Disruption, Mr. Landsborough did not forget it, "and when Saltcoats Free Church was completed, the poor cock, who had fallen from his high estate and passed through many vicissitudes, was again exalted to his former dignity, where he looks as proud and self-important as when he presided over 'the auld kirk o' Steynstoune.'"‡

Sometimes it came in a form which appealed to more solemn memories. At Muirkirk, the people met on the 27th of August, when addresses were delivered and services held for two hours, which ended in the singing of the last verses of Psalm cxxii. "A blue silk banner, having a St. Andrew's cross in faded white on the upper and inner border, and a dark-coloured crown over a thistle opposite, with the words painted brown in the centre,

* Assembly Proceedings. † *Witness*, 28th Dec. 1844. ‡ Memoir, p. 170.

'Moorkirk—For God—King and Covenant,' and which is said to have seen service at Drumclog, was furnished for the occasion by Mr. John Gemmill, farmer at Garple, in the parish, to whose family this heirloom has now descended from the Campbells of Auldhouse Burn, also in the parish." * It is not difficult in such an incident—the carrying forth of that old, faded, blue-silk banner—to read what the sentiments were which filled men's hearts when they met together to lay the foundation-stone of their church.

But now, in the midst of these difficulties on the one hand, and that assistance on the other, we may note the progress of church building. It was marked and rapid. In May, 1844—one year after the Disruption—470 churches were reported as already built and completed, or on the point of immediate completion. Fifty of the *quoad sacra* churches were still retained, so that as the result of one year's work, 520 congregations were already provided for.

In May, 1845, sixty additional churches were reported as finished.

Again, in 1846, ninety-five new churches were added, and in May, 1847, fifty-five more were reported. Thus, at the end of four years, considerably more than 700 churches had been provided.

Among the hundreds of buildings thus put up, it must be admitted that there were many whose architectural appearance was of the humblest kind. The Free Church might well be satisfied, indeed, with the skill of those architects—men of high standing—who, with more than professional zeal, gave their services to the cause. But their task was difficult. The grant from the general fund was at the rate of five shillings a-sitting. In many cases the poverty of the people did not allow of their raising any adequate additional sum,† and very humble buildings, therefore, had to be erected. Even in the larger towns,

* *Witness*, 14th Sept. 1844.

† At Latheron, a church seated for 800 is built for £350, another in the North is reported as finished at eight shillings a-sitting. What could architects do within such limits?

wealthy congregations vied with each other in the effort to make their churches cheap and plain, in order that they might be able the more liberally to help their poorer brethren in the country.

And yet, in spite of all this, cases were not awanting in which cheapness of construction was combined with no small measure of architectural effect. This was seen, for example, at Saltcoats, where a site was obtained, as we saw, through the kindness of Dr. Dow. "The ground," Dr. Landsborough writes, "was in an excellent situation, but, as it was triangular, we feared that it might not answer as a site of a church, especially as a person of some architectural skill said that it was out of the question. Knowing the high character of Mr. Cousin, of Edinburgh, as an architect, we applied to him for advice, giving him a plan of the ground. He wrote, that a church containing 700 sittings might be erected on it, but that it would require a special plan." Though they had to keep within fifteen shillings a-sitting, it is stated: "We have got not only a cheap and substantial church, but one which is tasteful in its external appearance, and still more so in its internal arrangements. I am more than borne out in all that I have stated by what was said to me by a baronet, not only of good taste, but of so much acknowledged worth, that I wish I could say he is a Free Churchman. 'I have just been admiring,' said he, 'your new church. It and the church at Ascog, in Bute, are the most beautiful churches in Scotland.' 'That is highly complimentary, Sir ——,' said I. 'Yes,' he replied, 'but the compliment is merited.'" *

The most remarkable, however, of such cases, was the building erected for the three leading congregations in Aberdeen. The site was the finest in that city, and was admirably turned to account by the architect who had been selected. One of the local newspapers, far from friendly to the Free Church, described the building at the time of its opening as having "added a new and strikingly picturesque feature to the already numerous architectural embellishments of our city. The fabric is composed of a group of three churches, and when viewed from Union

* *Witness*, 2nd March, 1844.

Bridge has the aspect of a cathedral. . . . In the angle, formed by the nave and south transept, rises a lofty square tower, from which springs a spire of the most airy proportions. The height of the tower is 90 feet, and of the spire, 84; making the whole elevation above the ground level 174 feet, and above the Denburn, 204 feet. . . . The style of the fabric, which is most chastely and appropriately sustained throughout, is that of the simple lancet Gothic. The effect of the group is extremely imposing and picturesque, partly owing to the advantages of the site selected for the fabric. Perhaps the most picturesque view of the building is obtained from a point in Union Terrace, where the great western window, tower, and spire are partially revealed through the intervening foliage. The building is from a design from Mr. Archibald Simpson of this city, and deserves to be classed with the most successful specimens of his skill, genius, and taste. We understand the whole expense of the building [containing 3446 sittings in the three churches] will be under £5000. Considerations of economy suggested the employment of the least expensive materials, and the result has been a remarkable exemplification to how great account such means may be turned in the hands of professional talent."* It is only right to state that much of this success was due to Francis Edmond, Esq., advocate, who rendered valuable service, first in securing the site, and afterwards in carrying through the undertaking.

Thus, amidst the co-operation of many willing hands, hundreds of churches, in very various forms rose over the land. There were interesting days connected with the laying of the foundation-stones, and not less interesting scenes at the opening of the churches themselves. In the great majority of cases, winter had come before the buildings were ready. Of the incidents connected with the opening services, a few examples may be given.

The Free Church of Gatehouse (Girthon) was opened on the 8th December. "No doubt, many of the congregation called to remembrance the dying prayer of their late much-beloved pastor [Mr. Jeffrey], when he said, in reference to this building,

* Quoted in *Witness*, 28th August, 1844.

'Let the copestone be brought forth with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace, unto it!' . . . Every pew and passage was crowded to excess." *

At Torphichen, the Free Church was opened by Dr. Hetherington, on Sabbath, the 6th August. It is seated for 400, but the day was fine, and soon after the door was opened the building was filled, there being within the walls nearly 500, and many were standing in the porch and round the doors. The meeting displayed not only the greatest regularity, earnestness, and order, but repeatedly manifested deep emotion when even a brief reference was made to the solemn circumstances of the event. †

"At the end of November, 1845, our new church [Ayr] was opened by the Rev. Dr. Brown, of Free St. John's, Glasgow; and the Rev. Dr. Candlish, of Free St. George's, Edinburgh. Our opening collection amounted to £300, then thought a large sum. The church cost £3300. In preaching for the last time in the wooden church, my text had been, 'If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence.' I still remember the thrill of delight with which I heard Dr. Brown give out the first text in our new church—'My presence shall go with thee.' The people thought that Dr. Brown and I had arranged it thus. But it was not so. It was only the night before that Dr. Brown had learned what my text had been, and I did not know what his text was until I heard it from the pulpit." ‡

The feelings with which the people entered on the possession of their new churches were sometimes very openly shown. "We are all very anxious," one writes, 4th November, 1843, "at the thought of being two more Sundays in the barn. Last day some of the people were trembling with cold the whole time." Again, 23rd November—"We had a beautiful day last Sabbath for the opening—the roads hard and dry, the church packed full. I wish you could have seen the faces of the people, who are not great adepts at concealing their feelings, each looking as if the church was his own individual concern. . . . And oh!

* *Witness*, 14th December, 1844.
† *Witness*, 12th August, 1843.
‡ Disr. Mss. xli. p. 12, Rev. W. Grant.

the faces of some of them as they came out; they seemed to feel as if it were a subject beyond speaking about."

Of the minister's feelings in his opening services, we give a single example from the sermon of Dr. Candlish when entering his new church in the Lothian Road. "It was a grand Gospel sermon," says Mr. Maclagan, "very full of solemnity, in argument and appeal. The roll of that musical voice is perhaps in the ears of others as it is in mine, when with these words, thrilling like a prophet's warning, he concluded: 'Such is our Gospel. We have considered, brethren, how best we might improve this occasion of the opening of our new house of prayer, and we have been led to take advantage of it for bringing before you, as God enabled us, a simple summary of the evangelical message in its connection with the sovereignty which it asserts on the one hand, and the submission which it requires on the other.

"'Nor does it seem necessary to add more than a single remark. Your presence in this sanctuary, and my occupying this chair of truth, pledge us mutually—you to hear, and me to proclaim this counsel of God. May the Lord give us grace to be faithful. Or, if ever the time shall be when you, or those who come after you to fill these seats, may refuse to hear this wholesome doctrine; or when I, or those who take my place in this pulpit, may shun to declare it—sooner may this fair and goodly structure crumble in the dust, and of all its ample walls not one stone be left upon another that shall not be cast down.'"*

But while men were thankful thus to enter their churches, yet there were sacred memories connected with many of those temporary places of worship which were fondly cherished, and in some cases they found touching expression in various forms.

Thus, at Kilsyth, Dr. Burns states: "Our people have a sweet recollection of the meetings we have had at the tent by the Garrel stream. The summer following we had one meeting

* History of St. George's, Edinburgh, p. 92.

there, on a warm Sabbath-day, as a pleasing renovation and reminiscence of those days gone by." *

At Greenock, during the time that the Gaelic congregation were worshipping in the old dilapidated West Church, three communions were dispensed; "and solemn communion seasons they were, Mr. M'Bean (the pastor) often remarking to his friends, in the course of conversation, that he enjoyed much of his Master's presence on these occasions."†

Of the wooden churches, that which outlasted all others was the church at Monzie, erected at the expense of Mr. Campbell, then M.P. for Argyllshire. Mr. Omond states: "It was more commodious than ornamental; but it was comfortable, and its acoustics were perfect. It was completed and taken possession of on the 27th August. It was replaced in 1868 by a permanent and more beautiful structure; but hallowed memories cluster round the old place—memories of a time when the Lord's goings were heard in that sanctuary, and when much blessing was experienced by many who have left the service on earth for the higher service above."‡

With similar feelings, Mr. Maclagan refers to the memorable brick church in Castle Terrace, which Dr. Candlish and his congregation occupied at first as a temporary place of worship. "I cannot allow myself to part from the brick church without a few words. I know not how it may be with others among us who remember our services there, but to me its memories are inexpressibly solemn and tender. The Disruption, no doubt, was a quickening time in the highest and best sense, but it was also a time full of affecting associations and painful regrets. Both combined made the eighteen months of our brick-church worship very memorable. Its communions were singularly impressive occasions, and there are other days of bright and hallowed service which are quite unforgettable. It was at the July Communion of 1843 that Dr. Chalmers preached, with wonderful vigour, on the Sabbath evening from the text, 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved'

* Disr. Mss. xxix. p. 14.

† Disruption Reminiscences, &c., by A. J. Black, p. 19.

‡ Disr. Mss. lxi.

(Jer. viii. 20)—the sermon published in his works. It may be sentimentalism, or that tenderness with which as our years increase upon us we regard old times and places, but whatever may be its origin, I have a feeling of refreshing and revival as I look back upon the brick church. One of our poets has expressed the experience I refer to—

> "'There are in our existence spots of time
> That with distinct pre-eminence retain
> A renovating virtue.'" *

One more illustration we take from a country parish in East Lothian, as described by Mr. Dodds, partly in prose and partly in verse. "I preached during the whole summer in Humbie Dean, from the tent that was erected every Sabbath morning. The spot where we met was a hollow in the steep bank, formed by the hand of nature, and overshadowed by tall trees. It was a secluded and romantic place, and most convenient for our purpose. Both the people and myself became much attached to it, and it is now famous in the parish of Humbie. †

> "In that sweet spot, the summer long,
> We met each Sabbath day.
> * * * * *
> "There, oft the father gave his child
> In covenant to God,
> And vowed to rear it in the paths
> His faithful fathers trod.
> God's grace be with the little babes
> Who thus in faith have been
> Baptised with water from the brook
> In lovely Humbie Dean.
>
> "And there one holy Sabbath day,
> The blest Communion board
> We spread in reverence and love—
> The table of the Lord.
> We brake the bread, and drank the wine,
> And oh! what things unseen;
> We saw so clear, and felt so near,
> In lovely Humbie Dean.

* History of St. George's, Edinburgh, pp. 90, 91.
† Disr. Mss. xxxiii. pp. 3-5.

"Oh! never let from me depart
The memory of that place,
Where on the worn and weary heart
Fell such sweet showers of grace.
And may we meet before the throne,
Our robes washed white and clean,
Who met as followers of the Lamb
In lovely Humbie Dean."

XXIV. The Sustentation Fund.

The first step, then, had been successfully taken—the building of churches was provided for. But there was another demand, not less immediately urgent. Incomes must be found for the hundreds of ministers whose livings had been sacrificed, and religious ordinances must be supplied in answer to those appeals of the people, which came from every district, and from almost every parish in the land. To meet the demands of such an emergency it was evident that some special effort would be required.

The keen discussions of the voluntary controversy had so far prepared the way. There had been laid bare—as was believed—one point of weakness in the system of those Dissenting Churches, where each was left, financially, to stand alone. In not a few weak and struggling congregations there was much that was trying both to minister and people, while in poor and thinly-peopled districts, like those of the Highlands, Dissent had hardly been able to obtain a footing. Now the claim of the Free Church to be the true National Church of Scotland made it necessary to supply ordinances to her adherents all over the country, and nowhere more than in those Highland districts into which Dissent had hitherto been unable to penetrate.

It was to meet the demands of such an undertaking that the Sustentation Fund was instituted—a bold experiment, for which there was really no precedent anywhere in the history of the Christian Church, and which deserves special attention as constituting the peculiar and distinctive feature of Free Church finance. Under God it was due to the marvellous sagacity of Dr. Chalmers, from whose mind it came forth at the time of the Convo-

cation, elaborated and complete, down almost to its minutest detail.

The general idea of the scheme was, that for the purposes of this fund the whole Free Church should be combined into one great confederacy, where EACH CONGREGATION SHOULD DO ITS PART IN SUSTAINING THE WHOLE, AND THE WHOLE SHOULD SUSTAIN EACH CONGREGATION. This grand principle of *share and share alike* was first announced by Dr. Candlish, in August, 1841, and it came well from his lips as minister of the wealthiest congregation in the Church. No less nobly was the same sentiment uttered by Dr. Chalmers: "It is well that the ministers of our most remote and destitute localities should know that they have the capability of the whole religious public of Scotland to count upon; yea, more, it were one of the most precious fruits of this arrangement, that the very oldest of our ministers, those venerable fathers who have borne the burden and heat of the day, perhaps unable to labour, yet unwilling and ashamed to remain in fellowship with a Church that has bowed the knee to an Erastian domination—it were indeed a heartfelt satisfaction to assure all such that they will not be forsaken by their brethren at large, but that, admitted to the highest place of honour in the Free and unfettered Church of Scotland, they, to the day of their death, will be made to participate equally and alike with them in the joint-offerings of her children." *

Such was the great principle, the corner-stone on which the Sustentation Fund was built. But it was obvious from the first that much would depend on the practical arrangements by which the scheme was carried out. With marvellous skill on the part of Dr. Chalmers, these were elaborated and adjusted so as to work in harmony with the general principles of our Presbyterian system. In every parish an association was to be formed, of collectors to go the round of the families month by month, or oftener, and to receive such contributions as were offered. These collectors were placed in connection with the deacons and other office-bearers of each congregation, under whose management the whole proceedings were to be conducted; and periodically the amount of these contributions was to be

* Assembly Proceedings, 1843, pp. 157, 158.

remitted to the great central treasury of the Church, out of which the ministers were each to receive an *equal dividend.*

If this had been all, however, it is obvious that an equal dividend would have been the most unequal of all arrangements—the expense of maintaining the social position of a minister in certain localities being so much greater than in others.

Along with the Sustentation Fund, therefore, there was conjoined another—the Congregational Fund—to enable the people in each parish, by collections or otherwise, to supplement the income of their own pastor according to their ability. By means of this twofold arrangement, scope was given for appealing to the most powerful motives, for in contributing to the General Sustentation Fund, men would be acting from the pure and high principle of looking not on their own things but on the things of others—the generous feeling that they were standing side by side with their poorer brethren, in providing the ordinances of the Gospel throughout the most remote localities in the land. On the other hand, in contributing to the Congregational Fund, men were acting under the motive to which the Apostle appeals—"Let him that is taught in the word communicate to him that teacheth," &c. The home feeling of affectionate personal regard for their own pastor,—the satisfaction of ministering in carnal things to him who was ministering to them in things spiritual—would thus have free scope, and so these two funds were intended to act as combined forces, each strengthening the other in building up the Church, and fostering the interests of congregations in every separate locality.

Such was the general idea of the fund as announced beforehand. Then came the practical object, to which, with characteristic ardour, Dr. Chalmers directed his energies, the actual setting up and putting in motion of the machinery by which the fund was to be wrought.

First, there was a loud and earnest appeal for men to give their aid as collectors. "In ordinary times, and for ordinary objects, the management of religious appeals is entrusted to a few, and those who are specially invited or appointed to the task of collection go forth on the good errand, while others do not run because they have not been sent.

"It must be otherwise in a movement like ours. For a work so large, and entitled to the best exertions of all, we invite every man and every woman in whom is found willingness of mind and concern for the glory of the Redeemer's crown, to hold themselves appointed to this work, as if they had been personally selected and called by name."

Female help was specially invited. "Whether we look for a greater enthusiasm at the outset, or for patient, untiring duteous attention and assiduity afterwards, for devotedness of purpose and principle, followed up by diligent and ever-doing performance, it will be found in greatest readiness and perfection among the members of a female agency, who still, as in the purely apostolic times of Paul, are ready to give themselves up, like Phœbe of old, as servants of the Church; or like Priscilla, to be our helpers in Christ Jesus; or like Mary, to bestow much labour on us; or like Tryphena and Tryphosa, who laboured in the Lord; or Persis, who laboured much in the Lord." *

The spirit in which they were to go forth was laid down—two things being specially insisted on.

First, there must be earnest prayer. "We trust there has been amongst you much fervent and special prayer for a blessing on this effort, for guidance and direction to all who shall take part in it, and that you are in a state of preparedness for going forth on your holy duty, seeking that in you and by you the Lord may be glorified."

Then, special care must be taken to repress the spirit of controversy. "Cease, as we have already counselled you, from all debate. Let not your voice be heard in the streets. In the spirit of meekness let the object at which we aim be plainly, truly, firmly, but temperately stated. . . . Ours is a spiritual warfare, our weapons are spiritual also. We seek to establish no domination, to wage warfare with none around us; but our heart is set upon maintaining a testimony for God in the land." †

It was in this way that the work of the collectors must be done. But it was not enough to send forth these appeals and instructions: Dr. Chalmers resolved to go before, and show the way.

* Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers, vol. iv. p. 557.

† Tenth Communication, p. 2.

Few who heard him can forget the scene when he stood on the platform of the first Free Assembly, and told of the progress which had been made. "The great obstacle," he said, "was the idea that the raising of so large a sum was an impossibility. By this thought some were paralysed, as it were, into despair. It was far easier practically to do the thing than to convince the people that the thing was practicable. The difficulty lay not in doing the work when begun, but wholly in getting it begun; not in the execution of its process after its commencement, but in overcoming the incredulity which stood as a barrier in the way of its commencement. . . . In order to overcome this in my own little sphere, and in a parish where eight-ninths of the aristocracy of the soil are against us, I did begin a little association—I mean the parish of Morningside. But we remained for six whole weeks in a state of *single blessedness*—we had not a single companion, but stood as a spectacle to be gazed at with a sort of gaping wonder till we actually felt our situation painful, and felt as if we stood on a pillory; but now that we have been followed by no less than 687 associations, our singularity, we begin to feel, sits rather gracefully upon us." He recounted the results of a few weeks operations, and declared —"Experience has already made it palpable, and is making it more and more so every day, that these associations will prove the sheet-anchor, as it were, of the financial prosperity of our Protesting Church. Their individual contributions may be small, but the aggregate produce of them all will come to a much mightier sum than you will arrive at by casting up all the donations which the rich throw into the treasury."

And then, rising from these details, he referred to the grand object of all such efforts. "You will recollect that though the application of the first portion of the fund goes towards—I will not say the support of the ejected ministers, but towards the upholding of the continuance of their services—yet, after that is secured, and after the maximum has been attained, the sums over and above contributed will go, not to the augmentation of ministerial income, but to the augmentation of ministerial services—not to the increase of the salaries of the ministers, but to the increase of their numbers; and we shall not stop short,

I trust, in our great and glorious enterprise till, in the language you have already heard, the light of the Gospel be carried to every cottage door within the limits of the Scottish territory. You are familiar with the liberal and large-hearted aspirations of John Knox, when he talked of a college for every great town, and a minister for every thousand of the population. I will not specify at present any limits to our ministerial charges, but there is an indefinite field of Christian usefulness before us, and we must not let down our exertions till the optimism of our condition as a Church is fully realised." *

With these noble aspirations the scheme of the Sustentation Fund was launched. One essential feature—referred to above—was the fixing of a maximum sum, which each minister should receive as an equal dividend. If the fund fell short, the dividend would be proportionally diminished to any extent; if the fund rose, the dividend should not rise beyond the fixed sum agreed on, and then the overflow would be applied to the extension of the Church.

At the meeting of the first Assembly, it was necessary to consider what this maximum amount should be, and on the 25th of May the question was taken up at a private meeting, from which reporters were excluded. The original idea which Dr. Chalmers had propounded at the Convocation in the previous November was, to fix the amount at £200 a-year. It was now pointed out, that if the outgoing ministers were to receive this sum it would greatly obstruct the advancement of the Church, by preventing the addition of new ministerial charges. On the other hand, there were some, chiefly among the laity, who advocated the larger amount in consideration of the sacrifices to which ministers had submitted, and in view of the fact, that in the great majority of rural parishes, the equal dividend would constitute the whole living. The result, however, was, that the general interests of the Church and of the people prevailed, and the lower sum was fixed. One of the most distinguished laymen—Alexander Thomson, Esq. of Banchory, a member of Assembly—refers to the circumstance in his diary,

* Assembly Proceedings, 1843, pp. 52, 53.

and bears his testimony to "the noble conduct of the ministers in taking £150 rather than £200."*

In after-years the same spirit of self-denial was acted on. At first the understanding was, that the equal dividend thus fixed on must be reached before any extension should take place, and that only the overplus should be employed in adding to the number of ministerial charges. That, indeed, was the meaning of the arrangement. In practice, however, it was at once lost sight of. New congregations were constantly coming in considerable number, asking a place on the platform, certain to add new burdens and keep down the dividend; but none were so sure to vote for their reception as the ministers already dependent on the proceeds. For many a day, although the gross amount of the fund was steadily rising, no approximation was made to either of the sums which had been spoken of—the £150 or the £200.

For, indeed, the enterprise had at the outset great difficulties to contend with. There were many other clamant demands pressing on the people during those opening years, and a still greater obstacle was presented by the circumstance just referred to—the rapid multiplication of ministerial charges.

In the course of the first year the amount raised for the general fund was £61,000, but the ministers had increased to 583, and the stipend to each was only £105.

During the second year the sum had risen to £76,180, but the ministers were now 627, and the stipend was £122.

This was the process which, for a considerable number of years, went steadily forward. The fund was, on the whole, increasing, but the number of ministers increased also, and the ministerial income continued long to be far below what the Church desired to see.

There was, however, a still more serious question—could even this amount of success be relied on to continue in the future? Amid the fervour and excitement of Disruption times, men's hearts were opened, their contributions freely flowed, but as the years began to pass away, would not these sources of income

* Memoir, p. 288.

gradually dry up? It was no secret that this was what many of the adversaries of the Free Church confidently expected, and there were not a few even of her warmest friends who were unduly apprehensive.

In combating such fears, Dr. Chalmers set himself from the very outset to proclaim the necessity of looking to "the power of littles," and to the steady working of associations, rather than to the generous donations of a few of the Church's wealthy members. "To rest the prosperity of the Church on powerful but momentary appeals, and not on regularly working associations, were as grievously impolitic as to build our calculations for the agriculture of a country on the brawling winter torrents which perform their brief and noisy course in channels that soon run out, and are only known to have existed by the dry and deserted beds they have left behind them, instead of building our calculations and our hopes on those tiny but innumerable drops which fall in universal and fertilising showers on the thirsty ground that is beneath them." *

With this view, Dr. Chalmers, at so early a period, struck the key-note—a penny a-week from every family in Scotland. In the hearing of the Convocation, he referred to the case of a clerical friend from the Island of Skye, to whom it had seemed impossible that the inhabitants of a certain parish in that island could give any assistance whatever, and that they must be altogether helped from without in keeping up the Gospel ministry amongst them. "When I asked whether absolutely nothing could be looked for—no, not even at the rate of a penny a-week from each household, he at once admitted, that if I came down to such a nothing, such a *bagatelle* as this, it could be easily afforded. Now, it is by just a putting together of such bagatelles, that I arrive at my conclusion, and I therefore repeat, that as far as the means are concerned we could obtain, and it is the very least and lowest computation we should think of making—we could obtain, after the loss of all our endowments, the sum of £100,000 in the year for the support of a Christian ministry in Scotland, without sensible encroachment on the comfort of any, without as much as the feeling of a sacrifice." †

* Assembly Proceedings, 1843, p. 156.

† Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers, vol. iv. Appendix, p. 555.

In the first General Assembly he returned to the subject. The success of the scheme would be "the achievement of many men, each doing a small thing. We deal, it is true, in the magnificent prediction of a magnificent result, but it is the result of a summation—the summation of little efforts made everywhere, nowhere of a strength that is gigantic. . . . We have thousands of collectors, but, as far as I know, not one giant among them; and hundreds of thousands of contributors, among whom we look for no other greatness than the moral greatness wherewith Christianity assimilates the men and women of all classes in society—from her who throws the widow's mite, to him who throws the costly gift into the Church's treasury. We count on no miracles, save those miracles of grace by which God makes a willing people in the day of His power, and through the operation of whose blessed Spirit it is that there are so many willing hearts as well as giving hands." *

Once more, at the Assembly of 1844, he reverted to this favourite theme, when dealing with some Highland ministers who had been pleading the poverty of their people as disabling them from contributing. "I am only sorry," he said, "when they were telling us of the inability of the people, that I did not put the question, whether *the practice of snuffing* was at all prevalent among them. Why, I believe that I could make out, by the Excise returns, that, in the Island of Islay alone, some £6000 a-year is spent on tobacco. The power of littles is wonderful. I began with *pennies*, I now come down to *pinches*, and say that, if we got but a tenth of the snuff used by Highlanders—every tenth pinch—it would enable us to support our whole ecclesiastical system in the Highlands. It is astonishing the power of infinitesimals. The mass of the planet Jupiter is made up of infinitesimals, and surely, after that, it is in the power of infinitesimals to make up a stipend for the minister of Ballahulish." †

Such was the truth which, in every varied form, Dr. Chalmers enforced and urged. The strength of the Sustentation Fund lay, not in the large contributions of the wealthy, but in the numerous

* Assembly Proceedings, 1843, p. 155.
† Assembly Proceedings, 1844, p. 253.

offerings of those in the middle and humbler ranks of life. It was on these that the safety and stability of the whole financial movement depended.

But, in connection with this, there was another and still more important truth—the springs of that liberality would be found to lie in the hearts and consciences of Christian men. Dr. R. Buchanan, into whose hands the management of the fund passed, and to whom it was so largely indebted, has said: "The dynamics of Church finance lie not in the physical force which silently backs the tax-gatherer's demand, but in the region of conscience alone. What the Church member shall give, or whether he shall give at all, is a question between himself and God—a question in which he may be advised and exhorted, but on which he may not, by any human force, be compelled. He to whom the offering is professedly brought, will not have it given grudgingly, or of necessity. It has, and can have, no acceptance with Him, save in so far as it is brought, not by constraint, but willingly. And hence the true secret of abiding success for any system of Church finance, however wisely planned, will be found chiefly and ultimately to depend on the Church's own practical efficiency in sustaining and cultivating the moral and spiritual life of its members. Superstition, indeed, may thrive and grow rich among an ignorant population; but in an intelligent community, true religion can obtain adequate support for its ordinances and institutions only in proportion as it is accomplishing its high end in the hearts and lives of men. If this greatest of all the factors out of which the result comes be not taken into account, no reliable calculation as to the efficiency of any system of Church finance can be made." *

The great truth thus strikingly expressed and confirmed by long experience was just what Dr. Chalmers had no less strikingly proclaimed at the outset. "The contributions," he says, "will rise or fall just with the rise or fall of personal Christianity among our people. It is to Him who toucheth and turneth the hearts of men whithersoever He will that we look for all our present and all our future sufficiency. . . . It is not to excite-

* Rev. Dr. Robert Buchanan. Finance of the Free Church, p. 92.

ment, or novelty, or ingenious devices for raising money, or the transient impression of oratory from a platform on the feelings of an assembled multitude, or even to the influx of liberality from abroad—it is not to any or all of these put together that we would confide either the solid progress or the ultimate settlement and completion of our Church in these lands; but, under God, we hope for all our prosperity in the calm and steady growth of Christian and devoted principle in the midst of our congregations. In other words, our immediate or—so palpable is it, that we had almost said—our whole dependence for the enlargement of our means is on the visitation and descent of God's own Spirit finding His way to human consciences, and making them alive to the urgencies and the claims of our great Home Mission, and to the sacred obligation, not of supporting our present ministrations alone, but of extending and carrying them forward among the perishing thousands of Scotland. This is alone the perennial fountain on which we reckon for all our abundance, which will only yield an overflow if fed by supplies of living water from the upper sanctuary—those supplies which are withheld from the vain and boastful confidence of man, and not given but to his humble and believing prayers." *

Such were the views with which the Fund was commenced, and no sooner were they fairly set before the Church, than everywhere there was the most generous and cordial response. Nothing was more wonderful during those early years than the way in which all ranks, rich and poor, cast their gifts into the treasury. The few instances to which we here refer must be taken merely as common examples of the spirit which generally prevailed in the Church.

Dr. Guthrie writes from Edinburgh: "The people here, not excepting the folks of the Bow and Grassmarket, are in a very lively and resolute state. For example, Lord Medwyn's servant . . . came over to me last week with £2 for the service of the Church. I proposed that, instead of giving it away at present, I would, with her leave, put it in the bank, when she told me that I might do so if I chose, but, she added,

* Assembly Proceedings, 1844, p. 138.

'I am laying by money at present in the savings bank for that very purpose.' Yesterday, a Highland woman, a namesake of our own, from the Braes of Lochaber, a member of my Church, and a servant in town, came with eight shillings for the service of the Church also, though I learned by cross-examination that she had her father in the Highlands to support. . . . I have no doubt, from the way that public feeling is rising and running, that our opponents will be astonished by-and-by." *

A collector in St. Luke's, Edinburgh, now a minister of the Free Church, states: "One day in my collecting rounds a servant woman offered me a pound note for the Sustentation Fund. I was rather unwilling to receive it, thinking it too much for one in her station. I therefore told her as much, but she pressed it upon me, saying, 'Take it. I believe it is for Christ and His cause.' Trifling as this incident may appear, it struck me forcibly."

"A lady, looking at her district, said, 'I fear I will rather need to *give* than *get*.' When her visits terminated, she returned, saying, 'I have not been in a house where I have not got at least a halfpenny a-week, and the persons who gave this mite would have been grieved if I had passed them over.'" †

The value of such gifts lay in the spirit of self-denial which they evinced. The money thus given to the cause of Christ had not only been hardly earned, but the gift implied the privation, in many cases, of what could ill be spared.

It must not, however, be thought that there was no self-denial among the rich. In ordinary circumstances there is not much of this. Rich men, for the most part, cast their gifts into God's treasury, and continue to surround themselves, as before, with the enjoyments of life, sitting as easily as ever in the midst of their comforts. But at the time of the Disruption there was a spirit of self-denial which went far beyond such limits.

A month before the event, it is stated in the "Eighth Monthly Communication," edited by Dr. Chalmers: "We know that in many instances measures of retrenchment in unnecessary expenditure are going forward, that nothing may be lacking in the House of the Lord."

* Memoir, vol. ii. p. 52. † Eighth Communication, p. 4.

Even at the Convocation he had announced: "Let me only, without giving names, tell of four specimens which have cast up within these few days. First, a thriving manufacturer, who is to stake £150 a-year on the moment when we are severed from endowments; then a gentleman of monied fortune, who undertakes in that event to furnish the maintenance of three clergymen and their families; then a widow, who, from the proceeds of her dowry and her own little fortune, dedicates £200 to the cause; and lastly, a master tradesman, who will let down his establishment to that of a journeyman or common mechanic, rather than that the Church, if abandoned by the State, should not be upheld, at least at the present extent of her efficiency and her means." *

When the Disruption actually took place, such anticipations were amply fulfilled. Mrs. Coutts, for example, who had recently succeeded to the liferent of a fortune of £30,000, found that her means, "though ampler than she had ever before possessed, seemed now more limited than ever, owing to her vastly more ample desires to extend her Christian benevolence. Being under the necessity, for the sake of her health, of changing her residence, she continued almost to grudge herself the small additional expense, "when she thought of the hardships and sufferings uncomplainingly borne by a large number of the ministers of the Free Church." †

In Edinburgh society at the time, one heard on all sides of families whose style of living had been changed. Things of the kind could not be concealed. There were houses in which a footman was no longer kept,‡ some who resided in the country drove a single horse instead of two,§ in other cases the carriage was given up.‖ One well-known member of St. George's congregation sold her house in a fashionable street, and retired to a small residence in what was then the farthest boundary of the city to the west, exposing herself to the good-humoured banter of Lord Cockburn: "Miss ——, what is this I hear! Is it true that you have sold that fine house and gone to live somewhere about half-way to Glasgow?"

"Two ladies of my own acquaintance," says Dr. Chalmers,

* Memoirs, vol. iv. p. 553.
† Memoir, p. 411.
‡ Misses Mure, Warriston.
§ Captain Shepherd, Kirkville.
‖ Mrs. Lee, of Rothesay.

"the descendants of a noble family, have quitted their commodious and elegant house in the country, and come to reside in Edinburgh for the purpose of being enabled to devote a larger sum to the support of the Free Church of Scotland. Another lady called on me to consult me in regard to an income of £200 a-year, and the amount which she ought to spend of it, and she offered to board herself with, and give her whole income to, the family of one of the ejected ministers." *

These examples will show the spirit which prevailed. There came, indeed, to be a strange kind of ingenuity among all ranks, in devising expedients by which they might be enabled to increase their contributions, as if to show that where there is a will there is a way.

"We know of one instance of a merchant in the West of Scotland, who has set apart a portion of his capital with which to trade on behalf of the Free Church. All that that portion of his capital realises he intends to cast into the General Sustentation Fund." †

Captain Shepherd, of Kirkville, Aberdeenshire, recommended that in all families in the Free Church, every child should be "entered as a member of the association as soon as it was entered on the baptismal register. That was the plan he had adopted, and he hoped his brethren in the eldership especially would adopt it also." ‡

In the family of a baronet, well known in the religious world, the children took their own way of contributing, giving up the use of sugar, that the cost of it might be added to the Sustentation Fund.

Sometimes the matter took rather amusing forms. In the Island of Arran, there was a well-known lady, who, at the time of the Disruption, resided with her father and brother, both decided supporters of the Establishment. She was equally decided in favour of the Free Church, and having no money of her own, she resolved, as the only thing she could do, to give up her snuff, and pay what it cost to the Sustentation Fund. Even

* Sixth Communication, p. 1.
† Monthly Statement, March, 1844, p. 3.
‡ Assembly Proceedings, 1846, p. 100.

in the best of people, however, human nature will assert itself, and the privation had, unfortunately, such an effect on her temper, that her father and brother besought her to resume her snuff, and they would most gladly pay the equivalent into the fund. After the death of her relatives, she had considerable means. "The worthy and pious lady, for such she was, is now where no such acts of self-denial are required!" *

"A poor man gave sixpence to the collector of his district, who said to him, 'This is too much, as I am going to come back.' The man thought for a moment, and his face brightened. 'I have it,' said he; so, taking back the sixpence, he gave twopence, saying, 'You shall get this every week.' 'But is not this still too much?' said the conscientious collector. 'No,' said the Christian contributor; 'I have been giving twopence a-week to the barber for shaving me, and now I'll shave myself.'" †

Stories of this kind may seem trivial, but none can fail to recognise the spirit of self-sacrificing earnestness which prompted such gifts.

"A young woman, who maintains herself by sewing in families, gave £1, and said that as long as she could thread a needle she would contribute this sum." ‡

In a parish near the southern borders of Scotland, there was a poor widow, who had two children to support, and to do this mainly by her own industry, as only the merest pittance was allowed her by the heritors. The third week after the collections began she called on the collector, who had previously passed her door, and said, "Why did you not come to me?" "I thought you so poor, we had more need to collect for than to take from you." "It is the first time, though, that my Master ever made such a demand on me, and He must not be gainsaid, nor me denied the pleasure of doing any little I can for Him. There are my three weeks' contributions—we'll trust Him for the time coming."

It was while this spirit prevailed among all classes of adherents that the Sustentation Fund was commenced, and it was left for the collectors to sustain and foster it while gathering in

* Communicated by Rev. D. Landsborough, Kilmarnock.
† Eighth Communication, p. 4. ‡ *Ibid.*

the fruits. They must be prepared, however, as Dr. Chalmers warned them, to encounter difficulties. Referring to his own particular parish at Morningside, Edinburgh—"We began operations," he says, "amidst a perfect storm of opposition from the higher ranks. . . . I was not previously aware—indeed I had no idea at all—that we should have had to encounter such a storm, but the collectors persevered, and we are now receiving at the rate of £6, 14s. a-week."

If opposition came in the form of scornful reproach, the collectors were urged to bear in mind that the fund was no mere provision for the ejected ministers, but a great Church extension movement, for the benefit of the community at large. "One could plead and hold up his face unabashed for such a design in any company, and before any assemblage. It may be stigmatised by our enemies as a beggarly expedition for a beggarly purpose. It will be no such thing. It will be a high errand of religious philanthropy, an enlarged and liberal scheme of Church extension, carried forward by periodical, generous, and heart-stirring appeals in behalf of a great object of Christian patriotism."*

All this, however, did not prevent such reproaches overtaking the collectors in due time; and though few could reply to them in language like that of Dr. Chalmers, yet the common people, in their own homely way, could sometimes deal with the adversaries effectively enough. By way of contrast, a single example may be given. "A godly, aged man, who was a catechist in a neighbouring parish, being jeered by a worldly rich sheep-farmer, a Moderate, saying, 'You of the Free Church are a set of beggars,' referring to our having few rich folk among us, and also to our collections. The honest man replied, 'Well, be it so; we read that at death the beggar went to heaven, but the rich man to hell.' The sheep-farmer said no more."†

Meanwhile, amidst difficulties on the one hand, and encouragements on the other, the scheme was carried forward; but it is no part of our design to trace here the history of its progress. As time went on, modifications were suggested, and to some extent adopted; yet to this day the Sustentation Fund pre-

* Assembly Proceedings, 1843, p. 157.

† Disr. Mss. xx. p. 10, Farr, Sutherlandshire.

serves its original character, and moves along the lines which were at first laid down. Without going into details, the general results may be briefly stated:—

During the first ten years, the average annual income was				£85,121
„	second	„	„	„ 108,312
„	third	„	„	„ 128,299
For the three years since completed, the average is				. 160,745

The supplements given by congregations have gone on increasing at a similar ratio.

It should be added that there is a surplus Sustentation Fund, out of which a very considerable proportion of the ministers have had their allowances largely augmented.

The number of ordained ministers, which at the Disruption was 470, is now upwards of 1000.

Such figures may give some idea of the progress of the fund, and of what it has done for that Church-extension movement of which Dr. Chalmers was the recognised leader and head. Its real value, however, is not to be measured by statistical tables.

It is the Sustentation Fund which has enabled the Church to supply religious ordinances in many a Highland and Lowland parish where the poverty of the people would have made it difficult, if not impossible, to maintain a Gospel ministry.

It is the Sustentation Fund which has enabled the Church to plant amidst the wynds and closes of our large cities so many of those ministerial charges which have been crowned with signal success in carrying the message of mercy to the most degraded portions of the population.

Results such as these might well be enough to recommend the system. But there are other advantages which should not be overlooked. It has consolidated the Church, drawing closer the bonds of brotherhood, making each minister feel that, however remote or obscure the locality in which he labours, he is not only the minister of his own congregation, but a minister of the whole Free Church which he represents, and in which all his brethren are identified with him, sustaining and strengthening his hands.

And added to this, there were indirect benefits, of no small importance, among the people. The Sustentation Fund has

drawn into closer fellowship the different ranks of society, and fostered Christian intercourse among the members of the same congregation. "More than once," in St. David's, Glasgow, for example, "the remark has been made to collectors as they went their rounds, 'Is it not strange that money, which is so often the source of division among friends, should prove among us a bond of love and union.'" * This had been fully anticipated. "You will be delighted," said Dr. Chalmers, "with the discoveries of kindly feeling you will meet with in the most wretched districts. . . . I have always felt that if the people were rightly addressed, there would be a response from them of which we have no imagination. . . . The thing that delights me in the working of this system is, that it brings the various classes of the community into more near converse and companionship with each other, and with those above them, and calls forth the same sympathies, the same neighbour-like feelings, the same play of kind and generous affections." †

In view of all this, the Free Church has surely good reason to give thanks for the institution of this great central Sustentation Fund; and still more for the fact that, after the lapse of thirty years, it not only holds its ground, but gives increasing indications of stability and success.

* Disr. Mss. i. p. 7. † Sixth Communication, p. 3.

XXV. The Schools.

One thing done by the Free Church at the time of the Disruption must now be admitted to have conferred signal benefits on the people of Scotland—the setting up of her elementary schools. In this, however, as in various other parts of her work, her course was decided by the conduct of others rather than by any preconceived purpose of her own. The circumstances in which she was placed compelled her to do what she did.

The way, indeed, had been well prepared. The men of the Disruption were strongly attached to the cause of scriptural education. All along, the Scottish Church has been the great promoter and guardian of the education of the people. Under Knox and Melville she fought against the selfishness of the Court on behalf of the parochial schools. The battle was long and hard; and when the real history of Scottish education comes to be written, it will be found that in many districts Acts of Parliament were of little weight with the heritors, and it was only in the face of their opposition or neglect that the establishment of schools was carried out by the parochial clergy. In more recent times, great efforts had been made to increase the means of instruction, Dr. Welsh, in Edinburgh, and Mr. Stow, in Glasgow, being especially conspicuous for the part which they took in setting up the Normal schools. In a similar way, many of the outgoing ministers had, at great trouble and expense, engaged in the work of education, attaching to the Establishment the schools which they had erected; and what is said of Mr. Andrew Gray, of Perth, applies to many of his brethren: "Of all the losses he had to sustain, what he felt perhaps most keenly was the loss of his schools. They might well be called *his* schools"—their erection being due to his

untiring energy and zeal, aided by a noble coadjutor, "his warm friend, Mr. Stewart Imrie, one of the most generous and large-hearted supporters of every good cause that Perth ever numbered among her citizens." These schools had to be let go out of his hands in 1843.*

Even if nothing had occurred to decide the course of the Church, there were strong reasons why such zealous educationists should have continued their efforts after the Disruption as they had done before. The importance of religious education—the training of the young for Christ—was still as great. It was still as essential a part of Home-Mission work, to be fostered and cherished alongside the preaching of the Gospel.

Added to this, there was a special inducement which might well have weighed with every patriotic Scotsman—the manifest deficiency in the amount of education then existing in the country. The parish schools had been stereotyped for generations, while the population had increased twice or threefold. In 1834 it was found, as the result of careful inquiry, that Scotland, as compared with other countries, stood low in the scale of school attendance. At the time when the Free Church Education Scheme was set up there were good grounds for believing that more than 200,000 Scottish children, who ought to have been at school, were growing up without the reality, and most of them without the semblance of education.

All this, however, would probably have failed to move the Church. Her hands, it might well have seemed, were already only too full of work that was indispensable—building churches, planting congregations, and sustaining ministers and missionaries. Whatever individual ministers might have thought, the Church as a whole would probably have been inclined to leave the question as to education in abeyance for the time.

But the conduct of the Establishment and its friends decided the matter. There was no alternative.

The first hint of the new movement came from Dr. Chalmers at Tanfield, two days after the Disruption; and his statement deserves attention, as explaining how the education scheme of the Free Church took its rise. "I am aware, and you

* Memoir of Rev. A. Gray, by Dr. Candlish, p. lxvi.

may have heard of some instances in which, not parish teachers [these required more time], but private teachers, most efficient teachers besides, have been dismissed from their employment, and turned adrift with their families on the wide world, for no other reason than that they approve of our principles. Such cases, I think, fairly come within our cognisance, and it is our duty to provide for them. We can get teaching for schoolmasters." *

This was followed, three days afterwards, by the statement of Dr. Welsh. "Schools to a certain extent must be opened to afford a suitable sphere of occupation for parochial, and still more for private teachers of schools, who are threatened with deprivation of their present office on account of their opinions upon the Church question. Such individuals should be invited instantly to give in their names to the Church, and provision should at once be made for their employment. Instances of tyranny, in some cases unmanly, and in all unworthy, threats of expulsion from their situations, of withdrawing small endowments, of taking away scholars supported by donations, have been brought under the notice of the Committee. They are the more deserving of attention on this account, that we have not only the case of cruelly injured teachers, but still more, perhaps, of the children who are to be put into different hands." †

It may be right to give some examples, showing how well founded such statements were. At Fairlie, near Largs, it is said: "The schoolhouse, which was claimed and taken possession of by Lord Glasgow on the feasible ground of the want of a lease, was built at the entire expense of Mr. Tennent, of Wellpark, and the late Mr. Parker [both members of the Free Church], at a cost of little less than £200, with the exception of some unwrought wood from the Kelburn estate." Mr. Pinkerton, the teacher, had joined the Free Church, and was at once warned to quit his schoolhouse and dwelling, "by Saturday first"—*i.e.*, in five days. But he had a written agreement as teacher, requiring six months' warning before his dismissal, and as he paid a nominal rent for his dwelling-house, his lordship found that this order could not be carried into execution.

* Assembly Proceedings, 1843, p. 54. † *Ibid.* p. 125.

Accordingly, he gave his consent—with what grace the reader may judge—to the school continuing "under the charge of Mr. Pinkerton, the present teacher, for the next six months, and subject as hitherto to the direction of Mr. Tennant." "I did so," he says, "as a matter of necessity, after seeing the agreement with Mr. Pinkerton, which entitles him to six months' notice of an intention of removing him, and requires him to give three months' notice of a wish to retire. If no such agreement had existed, I should have proceeded immediately to appoint another schoolmaster." *

The Duke of Sutherland was equally decided. "My parish," said Mr. Carment, of Rosskeen, "is a very extensive one, and I got erected in it two schools, one of which was put up chiefly at my own expense. Last year [1844] a summons of removal was served by the Duke of Sutherland to the schoolmaster, and another schoolmaster put into the school, erected principally by my money." †

In this way the lay friends of the Establishment signalised their zeal; but the ministers were not less energetic. Every teacher adhering to the Free Church who could by any means be reached was relentlessly assailed. In the parish of Campbeltown, for example, the educational staff was composed of nineteen male and female teachers, of public and private schools. "The process of ejection on the part of the Establishment of all the teachers who were under their control in any respect, and of some who were presumed to be under their jurisdiction, has been unsparingly executed. Nevertheless, this ruthless crusade against the faithful teachers has certainly not increased, either morally or physically, its shattered ranks." ‡

And as at Campbeltown, so elsewhere in Scotland, no mercy was shown. Seventy-seven of those who held parish schools, sixty Assembly-school teachers, and seventy-five belonging to the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, were expelled for no other reason than holding Free Church principles. Among others, the staff of the two Normal Schools in Edinburgh and Glasgow were ejected—the rectors, teachers, students, and

* Discourse, &c., by the Rev. J. Gemmel, 1844. Appendix.
† Assembly Proceedings, 1845, p. 77. ‡ *Witness*, 1st March, 1845.

pupils going over *en masse*. When the General Assembly met at Glasgow it was reported that 196 teachers of *private schools* had been cast out. In various parts of the country, indignation meetings, as they were called, were held, to protest against this treatment of men whom all classes of the community regarded with respect. But the ministers of the Establishment were remorseless, and the work of expulsion went bravely forward till nearly 400 of the best teachers in Scotland were sacrificed. And this was done by those who all the time were crying aloud in the ears of the country, that there was no difference between the two Churches!

Teachers thus cast out could not be treated with neglect by the Church to which they adhered. The Free Church was compelled, by the Establishment itself, to find employment for these men, and so to set up that Educational Scheme, the power of which was soon to be felt in the remotest corners of the land.

Assuredly it was in no half-hearted way that the cause was prosecuted. Mr. Lewis, of Leith, five months after the Disruption, gave in a report to the Glasgow Assembly, in which he paid a high tribute to those who had made the sacrifice. "We cannot close our report without rendering our humble passing tribute of admiration to the men who have so nobly witnessed for the truth, in the certain prospect of being thrown on the wide world for a provision for themselves and families. We speak not to depreciate the testimony borne by our fathers and brethren of this Assembly, or that which has so recently given new occasion for thanksgiving and many prayers—the testimony from the banks of the Ganges; but, faithful as these have been, we can discover an element that gives even a purer character to that lifted up by the teachers of Scotland, in their comparatively more obscure and humble walk of life. There was no visible necessity laid upon them as upon us to take up a self-denied testimony. They were not publicly committed. Their refusal of the testimony would not have been dishonour and apostasy. They had few or none of those advantages of mutual conference by which one man strengthens the heart of another, and which we so largely enjoyed. It was a question resolved between God and their own consciences, decided by each man apart in the

communings of his heart with the Word of truth, and in prospect of his final accountability to the God that gave it. Theirs has been a testimony proceeding from faith unfeigned, and from a pure heart fervently." *

And what then—if these were the feelings of the Church—what was to be done? At this point a youthful minister stepped forward to take up the cause, in a way which even yet, as we look back on it, may well be regarded with astonishment. Introduced by the convener, Mr. Macdonald, of Blairgowrie (now Dr. Macdonald, of North Leith), ascended the platform and laid his proposals before a crowded evening meeting of the Assembly. His idea was to go forth immediately and raise £50,000 for building 500 schools. It should be remembered that men at the time were laboriously striving to raise funds for church building, and the sustentation of the ministry. Every nerve, as it seemed, had already been strained to the uttermost, and it is not surprising that when men heard Mr. Macdonald's announcement, they, in the first instance, listened with wonder. But he had his plan ready, and with the utmost earnestness, it was laid before the House. He would himself go forth over all Scotland, and hoped to find subscribers enough to fill up the following scale of contributions :—

"Scheme for raising £50,000 to aid in the erection of 500 schools for the Free Church of Scotland. Each school to be aided to the extent of £100.

PLAN OF CONTRIBUTION.

500 persons giving 1s. to each of 500 schools yields being £25 individual contributions.	£12,500
1000 persons giving 6d. to each of 500 schools yields being £12, 10s. individual contributions.	12,500
2000 persons giving 3d. to each of 500 schools yields being £6, 5s. individual contributions.	12,500
6000 persons giving 1d. to each of 500 schools yields being £2, 1s. 8d. individual contributions.	12,500
9500 persons giving at the above rates yields . .	£50,000"

* Assembly Proceedings, Glasgow, 1843, p. 81.

Such were the details, and as he went on to advocate the scheme with all the ardour of youthful enthusiasm, the Assembly was fairly carried away. The approval of the plan was moved by Mr. Thomson, of Banchory, seconded by Dr. M'Farlan, of Greenock, agreed to by acclamation, recommended to the people of the Free Church, and Mr. Macdonald commissioned to go forth on his chosen work. Three days afterwards, Dr. Welsh wrote in the following terms:—"Edinburgh, 23rd October, 1843.—My dear Sir,—The more I reflect upon your plan, the more admirable it appears; and now that you have got the deliverance of the General Assembly in its favour, it requires only diligence and perseverance in the working to ensure success. It could not be in better hands than yours, and I sincerely hope that the members of our Church and the friends of education generally to whom you may apply, will do everything to facilitate your labours.—I am, with much esteem, my dear Sir, yours very sincerely, DAVID WELSH."

In this way the fund was commenced, but the reader will be best pleased to have the history of the movement as given in notes contributed by the members of Dr. Macdonald's family and other friends.

"Immediately after the close of that Assembly, Mr. Macdonald made arrangements for proceeding, without delay, to carry out his scheme. In the earliest notices received, and before the full amount subscribed in many of the places visited by him could be ascertained, we find in the east, for example, that Edinburgh subscribed £7000; Leith £1125; Musselburgh, £180; Newhaven, £300; Ormiston, £200; Prestonpans, £283; Cockpen, £260; Dirleton, £300; Haddington, £530; Gifford, £150; Prestonkirk, £371; while, farther south, such places as Dunse, Kelso, Jedburgh, and Hawick were visited, and subscribed liberally. Proceeding northward, we find St. Andrews subscribing £600; Cupar-Fife, £400; Perth, £1400; Dundee, £2700; Arbroath, £1100; Montrose, £900; and following Mr. Macdonald in his laborious journey, we find him writing from Aberdeen: 'My first meeting in Aberdeen is to be on Monday evening, at seven o'clock. On Wednesday I proceed to Peterhead, to hold a meeting there. I come back to hold a

second meeting in Aberdeen on Friday, and on Saturday I journey northward to Inverness, where, God willing, I intend preaching on the Sabbath. Ask strength for body and soul. Ask for the Spirit's presence and power in every meeting, and ask for the full completion of the present work; and to all your asking join thanksgiving for the innumerable mercies we are daily receiving. I am often astonished at the kind and Christian hospitality I have uniformly received. I have never yet, I think, been one night in an inn.' The above extract from a letter, written at a time when very few railways were available even in the centre of Scotland, and none at all in the North, may serve to indicate the arduous nature of Mr. Macdonald's labour in prosecuting his great scheme, and also to reveal the secret of his powers of endurance and of his wonderful success. In every place that he visited he first preached, and then expounded the plan by which he expected to raise so much money for schools; and, where the district admitted of it, he sometimes preached and explained his scheme at meetings held each day, for five or six days in succession! Proceeding to the far North, we find Inverness subscribing £1000; Tain, £500; Wick, £775; Thurso, £503; and, in like proportion, such places as Elgin, Banff, and Peterhead. In the West, Glasgow subscribed with its usual munificence, although the writer is unable to state the amount. Paisley, about £1300; Port-Glasgow, £400; Dumbarton and neighbourhood, £600; Rothesay, £1000; Ayr, £800. Kilmarnock, Maybole, Irvine, Dunoon, and such places, also subscribing with corresponding liberality."

"The correspondent quoted at the beginning of these notes, relative to this scheme, writes: 'Little did we dream, when first hearing from Mr. Macdonald from Glasgow detached accounts of a scheme for providing schools, that it would ultimately grow to such formidable dimensions, and involve so much personal labour and lengthened absence from his family and congregation. But so it was; nor do we grudge it, although now we feel as if, in after-life, it had told somewhat heavily on his constitution. It was a good work, and God was graciously pleased to mark His approval of it, for in no other way can we account for the almost marvellous success that attended his continued exertions.

Often did we smile when, on reading his letters, such passages would occur—'I have had the pleasure of meeting with Mr. ——. He is a delightful man. By the by, he has subscribed to my school scheme.' Indeed, we began to find that that was almost an infallible test of the real worth of his many friends!

"He used to tell us of an amusing incident connected with his visit to Manchester. The meeting had been all arranged, and the night fixed, but, unfortunately, it turned out wet and stormy, so that it was feared there would be but a thin gathering. However, the hour arrived, and the audience had taken their seats, when, alas! the gas entirely failed, and all seemed doomed to disappointment. What was to be done? Light must be had; so, making the best of what they could, candles were brought in. Two were placed on each side of the speaker, and from the midst of such illumination he proceeded to address the meeting. Dark and discouraging as was the prospect, you may imagine his delight when, at the close of the meeting, £500 was got. At Liverpool he had a very large and enthusiastic meeting, and at the close of it £1000 was subscribed.

"Thinking that he might be able to advance his scheme by a visit to London, he proceeded thither. A few days after his arrival he found that a large and influential deputation had come from Scotland for the purpose of interesting the people in the Free Church struggle, and, if possible, securing pecuniary help. They were therefore by no means greatly pleased that he should come as an interloper with his scheme while they were advocating theirs, both by holding public meetings and making private appeals. In deference to them, therefore, he did nothing, and thus nearly a fortnight of his valuable time was lost, and he felt quite disheartened. At length, however, he was informed that the deputation were to hold a public meeting in Regent Square Church, and that he being in London, they would give him, as a personal favour, the last half-hour in which he might plead his own scheme. Limited as such an arrangement was, he was thankful to get even this brief opportunity, and waited with no small impatience until the several speakers should be done; but alas! this consummation seemed a far way off. The first gentleman spoke for about an hour, the second nearly as long, and

knowing that a London audience rarely stayed longer that ten o'clock, he sighed as a third speaker rose, and he not the last of their number.

"The platform on which they were seated had been raised very considerably, so that those in the gallery might hear better, and a kind of ladder-stair at the back gave access to it. Mr. Macdonald, who was sitting behind, quietly rose, slipped down the steps, and gained the vestry. There he earnestly prayed that God might so influence the minds of the speakers that they might be short, and that there might yet be time for his unfolding his scheme. After thus committing it to the Lord, he quite unobservedly resumed his seat, and you may imagine his feelings when the speaker unexpectedly closed, and, turning round to him, said, 'Now, I have just been short for your sake!' Oh! the goodness of the Lord; how wonderfully He can and does answer prayer! The last speaker was also brief, and Mr. Macdonald was just about to begin, when the assembly simultaneously arose, and began to leave their seats.

"This was an unforeseen trial; but Mr. Patrick Shaw Stewart, M.P. for Renfrewshire, who was in the chair, kindly came to the rescue. Rising up, he said: 'I wish very much that you would wait a little longer. There is a young friend here from Scotland with some very ingenious plan for getting schools, and I should like much to hear him. Would you do me the favour of remaining a little while.' Thus appealed to, the audience resumed their seats; and Mr. Macdonald, lifting up his heart to God for help, began his tale, putting forth all his powers to make the best of his short but golden opportunity. Facts, anecdotes, appeals were all used to gain the desired end, and at the close, when subscription papers were handed round, the sum amounted to between £800 and £1000. It was subsequently increased to £1400. At first the deputation were not altogether pleased that the lion's share had fallen to the schools, but in the end they heartily rejoiced in the result."

"No wonder though, as remarked by the writer of the passage just quoted, the labour involved in Mr. Macdonald's prosecution of his scheme had in after-life told somewhat heavily on his constitution. This journey to England, and the

long and arduous journeys in Scotland, accomplished by him between October, 1843, and May, 1844, were fitted to try very severely the constitution of even so young a man, as he was at this time, and of a much stronger man than he ever was. *Apropos* of his youth, an amusing exhibition of incredulity as to his identity, owing to his youthful appearance, occurred on one of his journeys in the far North. Returning from Wick, he and other two male passengers were inside the stage-coach, when one of the two, addressing Mr. Macdonald, remarked: 'I understand that this Mr. Macdonald, who is raising so much money for building schools, was in Wick last night. I wonder if he had a good meeting.' 'Oh, yes,' was the reply, 'it was a very good meeting, and upwards of £700 was subscribed.' 'That,' said the passenger who had not yet spoken, 'that is Mr. Macdonald whom you are now speaking to.' But the inquirer about the preceding night's meeting was not to be so imposed upon; and scrutinisingly surveying Mr. Macdonald from head to foot, he exclaimed, with a leer of incredulity, 'Na, na; his *faither* might be the man, but that's no him.'

"As the month of May approached, Mr. Macdonald had made such progress that he felt certain of the complete attainment of his object before the meeting of the General Assembly. Early in May, 1844, he wrote from Hamilton as follows:—'The various reports of what has been done between last May and this May will be truly wonderful. Never, I suppose, in the history of the Church was so much done in one year—so many churches built, so many ministers sustained, such large missionary operations carried on, and such a large sum subscribed for schools. The success, indeed, is so wonderful that scarcely any one, unless wilfully blind, can fail to see the hand of God in it all.'

"At the Assembly which met in Edinburgh in 1844, and on the evening of the 28th of May, a truly noble and astonishing result was announced by Mr. Macdonald. There were, it appeared, many important places which he had not been able, during the few months since last October, to visit, and some reports having not yet come in, he could not state exactly what

had been subscribed; but he could certainly state that it was upwards of £52,000! And excepting £3000 subscribed in England, and mainly by Scotch Presbyterians, the whole amount had been subscribed by those very people who had already contributed with such unbounded liberality for the building of churches and sustaining a Gospel ministry both at home and abroad. . . .

"Dr. Candlish said 'that he could not but express the feeling which he entertained towards his friend, Mr. Macdonald, in reference to the matter which had that evening been before them. He has opened the springs of faith in the Divine promises among a large class of our people, and it were inexcusable in us to omit acknowledging the good hand of God in the success with which he had begun, carried on, and completed in faith this good work.' As convener of another committee, Dr. Candlish further said: 'We are deeply indebted to the labours of Mr. Macdonald, not only in reference to the scheme he has been the instrument of promoting, but for the great aid he has given us in preaching the Gospel, and administering ordinances in various parts of the country. In the present scarcity of ministerial labourers, and in the demand which exists for the preaching of the Gospel wherever he has arrived, he has not only made his appeal to the pockets of the people, but has filled their souls with the bread of life.' 'I have thought it was a providential thing that Mr. Macdonald was led to devise such a scheme as that which has occupied his attention, seeing it has been the cause of so much spiritual good throughout those parts of Scotland that he has visited.' . . .

"The Moderator, Dr. Henry Grey, then returned thanks to Mr. Macdonald. 'The scheme,' said Dr. Grey, 'was indeed an admirable one—simple in its means, sublime in its object, and I congratulate you on your success. In the other Christian enterprises of our Church many heads have combined their counsels, many hands have co-operated, many agents have been employed, and the Church in all its congregations has exerted its efforts. Your scheme originated with yourself; you have been the contriver, the counseller, the agent, the accomplisher

of it. No doubt you have received hearty sympathy and much valuable help; but you have won these for yourself, and to *you*, therefore, our thanks are due. And we have the purer pleasure in giving them that we know you will unite with us in rendering thanks supremely to Him from whom all good flows; who taught you to conceive, and enabled you to perform, the honourable service you have accomplished.' The Moderator concluded by requesting Mr. Macdonald to convey to his flock the thanks of the Assembly for the patience and generosity they had shown by so cheerfully acquiescing in his long and necessary absence. . . .

"One of the most gratifying results of Mr. Macdonald's recent visit to so many parts of Scotland was the impressively interesting evidence thereby afforded that the people of Scotland not only sympathised with, and were resolved to stand by and support, ministers and teachers adhering to Free Church principles, and ejected from their livings for conscience' sake, but also desired with heartfelt anxiety the preaching of the Gospel to themselves and a Christian education for their young. The response to Mr. Macdonald's appeals, it will be observed, was alike hearty and liberal, whether in the north, the south, the east, or the west. He was never allowed to lodge a single night in an inn, and at a very early stage of his labours he observed with peculiar satisfaction that at the *first* meeting in *every* place yet visited by him the amount subscribed had never been less than £100; and this interesting fact he did not fail to refer to as a stimulus in places subsequently visited, the final result being, that not even in Shetland was less than £100 subscribed at the first meeting."*

This remarkable movement, welcomed as it thus was, and crowned with such success, sufficiently proved that the Church was in earnest in the work of education; but not less is this seen when we look to the character of the men into whose hands the management of the scheme was entrusted. At first Mr. Lewis, of Leith (afterwards Dr. Lewis, of Rome) held the convenership. Then, for a short time, it was entrusted to

* Disr. Mss. lv.

Dr. Cunningham, and subsequently, in 1846, it was put into the hands of Dr. Candlish, under whom the work finally took shape. For many years the writer sat with him in this committee and its sub-committees. There is no need that he should say anything as to the powerful influence of the Convener, and the rare administrative talent which was brought to bear in furtherance of the work; but he may be allowed to give his testimony to the amount of labour and anxious thought expended on it by Dr. Candlish to an extent far beyond anything that the Church in general was aware of.

Under such guidance it was not long till the educational movement began to be rapidly developed, giving proof—if that had been needful—of how great the demand for additional means of instruction was in the country. In May, 1845, 280 schools were already in operation, but within two years there were 513 teachers on the scheme, and there was also a class of schools which, though not supported by the Committee, belonged really to the Free Church, bringing the whole number up to 650. Of these, 595 sent in returns in 1847, showing an attendance of more than 44,000, and the estimate was that, including the whole, the number of scholars would compare favourably with the attendance at all the parochial schools of Scotland. "The committee dwell on this result not in a spirit of boasting or exultation, but rather for the purpose of impressing on the Free Church a sense of her deep responsibility to God and the rising generation. She has a price given into her hands to buy wisdom. She has a precious opportunity in God's providence, and the Lord is making it manifest that the people of the land are not slow to answer any efforts that she may make. The committee press this consideration—viz., that already the number of children in attendance at the Free Church of Scotland's schools may be regarded as equal in number to the attendance on the whole parochial schools of Scotland altogether." *

In regard to the teachers to whom these schools were at first entrusted, it must be said that, as a class, they were men of no

* Assembly Proceedings, 1847, p. 126.

common eminence in their profession. Making full allowance for individual cases, and speaking only of the general result, there were good grounds for the statement made by Dr. Candlish in 1847. "In point of fact, when this Church was separated from the State at the Disruption, she obtained the services, in her educational department, of the very *elite*, the very flower, of all the educational bodies in all broad Scotland. She got the flower of the parochial teachers, she got the flower of the Assembly teachers, and by an act of infatuation during the past year, the Establishment has again given her the flower of that valuable body of men—the teachers of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge."

In proof of this he dwelt on the fact that they were men who had acted on their own views of Christian principle. "And if you take one with another, the men of any body, you will find that the men of Christian principle are, generally speaking, the men of intellectual power; where you have men of a firm principle, you will invariably find that these are not the men of the least intellectual energy. We have got the flower of our Scottish teachers, and already the steps taken by this Church, allow me to say, have had the effect of putting a spirit of enthusiasm, a spirit of heartiness, into your teachers that, as you will presently see, has stimulated them to high attainments, and encouraged them to persevere in your service in the face of all difficulties." *

It is not our purpose in these pages to trace the history of the scheme. One great difficulty which soon presented itself, arose out of the agitation for a national system of education; and what made the difficulty greater was the avowed preference which the Church and Dr. Candlish soon showed in favour of the movement. A feeling of uncertainty thus began to arise as to when our own scheme might be superseded, and in this way the hands of the committee were greatly weakened in appealing to the people. Yet, in the face of every difficulty, the scheme was carried steadily forward, with what results may be seen from the following authoritative statement, drawn up and laid before Members of Parliament in 1869.

* Assembly Proceedings, p. 128.

At the close of twenty-five years' work, this is what could be said:

"There are connected with and supported by the Free Church 598 schools (including two normal schools), with 633 teachers and 64,115 scholars. The results of the examination of schools receiving grants from the Privy Council by Her Majesty's inspectors, according to the revised code, show that the Free Church schools stand at the top of the elementary schools both in Scotland and England.

"The school buildings belonging to the Free Church have been erected at a cost of £220,000. Of this sum the Committee of Privy Council contributed £35,000, and the remainder, £185,000, has been raised by subscriptions and grants from the Free Church School Building Fund. The most of the buildings have been kept in good repair, at considerable expense to the congregations with which they are connected, and their present estimated value is about £180,000.

"The annual payments made to teachers from the education fund of the Free Church, amount to £10,000; and, in addition, congregations spend in supplementing the salaries of teachers and in charges connected with the maintenance of the schools, £6000 a-year.

"The total sum expended by the Free Church since the Disruption for educational purposes, is not less than £600,000."

The statement is brief, but it would be difficult to say what amount of skill, and labour, and prayer, and self-denying zeal were required to achieve such results; and it would be not less difficult to measure the benefits conferred on hundreds of thousands of the youth of the land who have passed through these schools, and are now rising up and taking their part in the work and responsibilities of life.

NOTE.—The attention of the reader is directed to the fact, that the Free Church schools, as tested by Government examination, stood at the head of the elementary schools of the country. There was nothing on which the Church was from the first more determined than to have

the education which she offered to the people of the very highest quality.

One proof of this among many which might be given, is a fact of some interest in the existing circumstances of Scotland at the present moment.

It is well known that an unfriendly feeling towards Normal schools has arisen in some quarters, as if they were antagonistic to the universities, and were meant to come between the teachers and a higher style of culture. If this ever were so in any quarter, it certainly never was in the Normal schools connected with the Free Church. A remarkable statement on the subject, made by Dr. Candlish just thirty years ago, on giving in his first report to the Assembly, deserves to be noticed. He was showing that these schools are really institutions for elevating and enlarging the minds of the teachers. "I will just say on this point, that the Committee are far from desiring that your Normal schools for teachers should ever take the place of, or supersede attendance at, the ordinary colleges or universities of Scotland. On the contrary, your Committee are perfectly prepared to recommend, if the House will adopt the recommendation, that it should be a condition, that any one competing for your higher rates of salary should show that he has been at least one or more years in attendance at the literary classes of the university. But the Committee beg to observe that attendance at the classes of the university has never until now, under any system in Scotland, been a necessary qualification, and we all know that the teachers, under the system that prevailed in the parochial schools, have been selected, except in some favoured districts of the country, very much without regard to such qualifications. This I state, not by any means as if it were not a right qualification, or as if it were not one which the Free Church *ought* to insist upon, but rather to explain why we have not hitherto insisted on this qualification in the teachers of your schools."

The view thus stated was, that the Normal schools ought to be a link of connection with our colleges, so as to confer on the teaching profession the benefits of a liberal university education. All along this result has to a considerable extent been attained,

and at the present moment (1877) more than ever it is the aim of the Education Committee of the Free Church. The reader, however, will not fail to observe how decidedly the church, thirty years ago, was looking in this direction, and in what strong terms her views were expressed by Dr. Candlish.

XXVI. The New College.

There are many in the Free Church who must still remember the rooms in George Street, where the classes of the New College met during the first years of its history. Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Welsh had resigned those professorships which they held and adorned in the University of Edinburgh, their last session in connection with the Establishment having terminated a few weeks before the Disruption. Without hesitation it was at once resolved to open a Divinity Hall for the Free Church, and a Committee was empowered to appoint professors, to engage premises, and to have everything prepared for beginning at the usual time in November. There was, indeed, no time to be lost in bringing forward young men for the ministry. The fields were white to the harvest, the labourers were few, and on all sides the cry was rising, "Send us ministers." Accordingly, at the Glasgow Assembly, the Committee were ready with their report. Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Welsh were to be joined by Dr. Duncan as Professor of Hebrew and Dr. Cunningham in the Chair of Church History, and the Free Church might well feel thankful, that in such men she had a staff of professors whose names were a tower of strength in support of the cause of God in the land.

Immediately before the close of the Assembly, Dr. Candlish made a memorable appeal for young men to devote themselves to the work of the ministry. "We are to expect no miracle, no baring of the Lord's arm in any unusual manner—that is, without the use of means. Let us, then, see what are the sources of the supply of labourers on which we may depend. . . . The first and chief of these . . . is the piety of Christian parents and the early devotion of Christian youth to the cause of the

Lord. On this point I think the parents in our congregations, and the young, need to be reminded of their obligations, and it were well if ministers more habitually pressed on the attention of their congregations the duty of parents to devote their children to the work of the ministry, even in their early infancy, and the duty of the pious among the youth of the land to devote themselves early to this sacred work. In this way we would have coming into our colleges, with a view to the ministry, the godly youth of the land, from all parts of the country. . . . We hail every new instance of a parent, stirred up by a sense of the loud call the Lord is addressing to him, to devote and consecrate a child to His service—every new instance of a young man turning away from the secular pursuits of earthly ambition, and consecrating himself to the ministry of the Word, in the service of a Church which has no higher prize to offer now than the prize of winning souls unto God." *

Within a week from the time when these words were spoken, the New College was opened at Edinburgh, the inaugural address being delivered in the Brick Church, Castle Terrace, by Dr. Chalmers, in the presence of "a large number of students, and a numerous and highly respectable audience." It was encouraging to see 103 young men of those formerly enrolled as students of divinity, rallying round the professors of the Free Church, and still more so, to find seventy-six entering as students of the first year. The number was large, but the fervour of Disruption feeling was strong among the youth of Scotland, and not among the youth alone. "We have had some very cheering instances," Dr. Chalmers said, "I could name about twenty or thirty, of men abandoning secular employments and professions, giving up the prospect of a large and liberal competency in the walks of business, to devote themselves to the Christian ministry, and who are in actual attendance at the theological seminary, or are engaged some of them in learning Greek, and studying the very elements of a collegiate education in the University of Edinburgh, and that in the hope that . . . they may fulfil the object upon which their hearts are set—that is, to labour in the service

* Assembly Proceedings, 1843, Glasgow, p. 170.

of the Gospel of Jesus Christ during the remainder of their lives." *

A commencement such as this was full of encouragement, but that first session had not run its course before the friends of the college felt that it was essential to have suitable collegiate buildings provided without delay. A movement with this object in view was set on foot, Mr. Earle Monteith, advocate, taking the lead. The first thing was to find a fitting site in some central and prominent position. It might be difficult to obtain, and costly, but the fact that so many of the leading congregations had been forced to place their churches out of sight, in back lanes and back greens, rendered it only the more needful to have the college set advantageously in public view.

In May, 1844, Mr. Monteith laid the subject before the Assembly, stating on high authority that from £20,000 to £25,000 would be required to "erect a college which would be a credit to the Church." If to this were added the cost of such a site as was intended, the expense would be great, but there was one circumstance which had given him confidence in the result. He had met Mr. Macdonald, of Blairgowrie, fresh from that wonderful tour in which, with such ease and so much pleasure to all parties, he had in half-a-year raised the sum of £50,000, and Mr. Monteith said, "When I stated this to him [the cost], and told him that I thought the time was now come when we should set about the erection, before he would give his approbation to the plan, he made it a condition that we should accept of £10,000 from himself. Some would have been very apt to take this as a boast, and I confess that had he made the offer to me six months ago, I would have been very apt to smile at it, but when we see that within the last six months he has raised five times the sum, I think we may consider that in the course of twelve months his £10,000 will be as sure as if we had his bank-bill for it." †

It need not be said how gladly this proposal was welcomed. Mr. Macdonald was cordially thanked for the £50,000 he had already raised, and with all the encouragement which the

* Assembly Proceedings, 1844, p. 250. † *Ibid.* p. 177.

Assembly could give, he was sent forth anew in quest of the £10,000 for the college.

Availing ourselves again of the narrative formerly quoted, we find that in this new undertaking Mr. Macdonald "met with the same overflowing kindness to himself personally, and the same liberality in subscribing to the cause, as had everywhere been extended to him when collecting the £50,000 for the erection of schools. He was frequently pronounced to be the most notable beggar of the time, and the enthusiasm manifested in favour of his schemes was truly astonishing. He diligently availed himself, no doubt, of every argument fitted to reach the hearts and consciences of his auditors, whether they were based upon facts gathered as he went along, or upon anecdotes, or passages of Scripture. He sometimes told a very effective illustration of a favourite text—'There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.' A lady resident in Edinburgh, and bearing a well-known and much-respected name, had undertaken to collect, in contributions of one shilling, a given amount for a very good purpose. There were, among others, two sisters, friends of hers, from each of whom she expected a shilling. Calling at their residence in the suburbs, she found only one of them at home. She, however, at once contributed a shilling for herself and also a shilling for her absent sister. The absent sister by-and-by met the lady who had been collecting the shillings, and informed her, to her utter amazement, that she decidedly objected to the contribution made by her sister on her behalf, and that the shilling must be returned. In vain did the lady remonstrate with her friend—the shilling must be paid back, and paid back there and then. It accordingly was, but with this remark, 'Well, well, there it is, but, depend upon it, you will get no blessing with it.' After some time, the two friends met again. Alluding to their last interview, the lady-collector said, 'Now, honestly tell me, did you get a blessing with that shilling?' Somewhat hesitatingly, the other replied, 'Well, to tell the real truth, the very day I took back the shilling *I lost a pound!*'

"In fulfilling his present task, Mr. Macdonald visited such localities as he had not been able to visit before. When in the

North, he was urged to go to Shetland; writing from which, in July, 1844, he says: 'The Lord has sent me here, and He has blessed my labours. I have got upwards of £100 in Lerwick, but, what is better, I think I have got souls. As we have no Free Church in Lerwick, I preached in the Secession Chapel, in the Independent Chapel, and last night in the Methodist Chapel.' It happened at this very time that Mr. Bruce, better known as Dr. Bruce, of Free St. Andrew's Church, Edinburgh, had arrived from Edinburgh, for the purpose of organising a Free Church congregation there; and while Mr. Macdonald preached in the Methodist Chapel the building was so crowded that Mr. Bruce and his sister, who were present, were obliged to sit on the pulpit stair. Mr. Macdonald visited Orkney at this time also, and there he received subscriptions for £340. Cromarty subscribed £150; and from Cromarty Mr. Macdonald wrote in August: 'I had the rare pleasure of meeting two very distinguished men here—Mr. Stewart, of Cromarty, and Hugh Miller, of the *Witness*. We had breakfast together at the minister's house, and I spent a most enjoyable morning with these remarkable men. They were both greatly interested in my work.' Nairn, Forres, Fochabers were visited on this journey, and subscribed. Huntly gave £318 and Keith £348.

"Returning from the North, Mr. Macdonald visited Hawick, Selkirk, Galashiels, Melrose, Bowden, Peebles, all in one week, and in October he visited Dumfries and Thornhill. An interesting account of his visit to these two last-named places appears in a local newspaper, as follows:—'Rev. Mr. Macdonald.—This gifted and devoted minister, before returning to his own flock, made a descent upon Dumfries, not with the highest expectations as to the result. Spite of the Caledonian Hunt, however, and other attractions there, a large assembly collected to hear him on the evening of Monday last, and, ere they parted, subscribed the sum of £806, 17s. 8d. On the same day, and in the same place, Dr. John Hunter, of the Tron, and Mr. James Cochrane, of Cupar [both belonging to the Establishment], after very emphatic addresses, succeeded in inducing the ladies of Dumfries to contribute the sum of £8, 3s. 4d. for the advancement of female education in India. Next day Mr. Macdonald set off for Thorn-

hill, and, after paying his respects to Janet Fraser, who was greatly delighted with his visit, preached at Virginhall in the evening, and explained his school-building scheme. The sum of £240 was raised without any difficulty. A shepherd, who had travelled all the way from Crawford Moor to hear him, subscribed his 500 pennies—more than a fourth part of the sum which the whole female aristocracy of Dumfries had contributed on the previous day for the cause of female education in India.'

"In the General Assembly of 1845, and on the 31st of May, Mr. Macdonald addressed the Assembly, and reported that he had fulfilled the three-months' duty on behalf of the College Fund, devolved upon him by the Assembly of 1844. He also expressed how much he regretted that he had not been able to visit many places in which he knew that a visit would have been very acceptable. The £10,000 additional, however, had all been subscribed." *

Thus successfully had Mr. Macdonald brought into the treasury the sum which he had promised to raise, and Mr. Monteith was ready no less successfully to do his part in laying it out to the best advantage. Already in the Assembly he had announced the purchase of a site at the head of the Mound, of which it was said, on the best authority, that "no better could have been found had we searched all Scotland." The expense, indeed, had been proportionally great—the first outlay (subsequently modified) had amounted to just £10,000 for the site alone, so that after the effort that had been made, the whole cost of the building had still to be provided for.

Here, once more, Mr. Macdonald interposed to offer a suggestion, perhaps the boldest in its conception, and that which, in the hands of Dr. Welsh, became the happiest in its execution of all these movements. "In the summer of 1844, and just before he had completed the work assigned to him by the Assembly in May, of raising subscriptions for £10,000 in aid of the New College, a munificent contribution was placed at Mr. Macdonald's disposal, which, under God, was the means of drawing forth, on the part of several individuals, 'an exhibition of the power of Christian principle' very seldom equalled. The

* Disr. Mss. lv.

honoured contributor, whose generous gift of £2000 was thus blessed, handed that amount to Mr. Macdonald, with power to him to apply it as he might believe to be most advisable for the benefit of the New College. . . .

"Now, the idea occurred to him that, as the less wealthy members of the Free Church had subscribed so heartily for the erection of schools, so the more wealthy members might be willing, if asked, to contribute of their abundance for the erection of a college. At the earliest opportunity he waited upon Dr. Welsh, the convener of the college committee, and informed him that he had received £2000 which could be applied for the building of the proposed New College; and then, for the first time, Mr. Macdonald suggested, and urged upon the convener, the propriety of trying to raise £20,000 in subscriptions of £1000 each, from twenty individuals, for this object. Dr. Welsh was not a little startled at this bold proposal of his young friend, but after discussing it, and looking at it on all sides, he agreed to give it a trial. Next morning, however, after sleeping over it, the revered and excellent doctor was much troubled with doubts as to the wisdom of acting on the suggestions of so ardent and youthful a counsellor. But while he was in this state of hesitation, Mr. Macdonald happened, fortunately, to call again. Returning to the subject with his usual enthusiasm, Dr. Welsh was prevailed upon finally to undertake the scheme. The result will be told by Dr. Welsh himself, in the following letter to Dr. Candlish, read at the Commission of Assembly on the 20th November, 1844:—

"'59 Melville Street, 20*th November*, 1844.

"'My dear Sir,—As in the present state of my health, I am advised not to attend the meeting of Commission this day, I shall be obliged to you to give in a report respecting the proceedings for building the college. The facts are simply these: About two months ago Mr. Macdonald, of Blairgowrie, called upon me to inform me that he had got £2000—or, perhaps, £3000—for building a new college, and urged upon me the propriety of endeavouring to raise £20,000 from twenty individuals. As I had got £1000, in addition to the sum procured

by Mr. Macdonald, I felt strongly inclined to undertake the duty, mainly from the desirableness of not distracting the people of Scotland in general with a new scheme, and partly also from the consideration that, as the middle and lower orders had raised £50,000 for the building of schools, £20,000 was not too much to expect from twenty of our wealthier adherents, who would thus perpetuate their names as exhibiting the power of Christian principle. Accordingly, I commenced operations, and in about a month £17,000 in all was the sum that was raised; and I have since that period got two additional names, making £19,000 in all. Had I not been taken ill in Glasgow when engaged in the work of raising subscriptions, I have no doubt whatever the sum of £20,000 would have been procured long ago, and it would have been more pleasant to me to have given a report that the whole was completed. But we must cheerfully submit to the ways of Divine Providence, knowing that they are always for the best. At present I do not mention the names of any of the contributors, as several of them objected to having their names published in the newspapers, and several of the donors are anonymous. While for the present, therefore, I abstain from giving any names, I think it proper to state that, while the motives of the individuals who have a hesitation as to giving publicity to their benevolence are of the most praiseworthy description, there are names on the list which, by their piety and station, would adorn any cause. I had almost forgot to state that I have the most perfect confidence in the sum being completed in a few days.—I am, &c., DAVID WELSH.'

"Dr. Candlish, in some humourous remarks, stated 'that the shares of this stock were at a premium, that only one share was in the market, for which the College Committee expected several competitors; and if the biddings for it were spirited it might be a matter of consideration whether or not a few more shares might not with propriety, and with great generosity on their part, be allocated. To our friends in the West we are greatly indebted, in coming forward with their wonted liberality on behalf of this scheme.'

"In the editorial column of the *Witness* newspaper of the day,

the following notice appeared:—'Our readers will peruse with peculiar interest and satisfaction the letter of Dr. Welsh in regard to the New College. Such a splendid and munificent subscription list will, we have no doubt, equally cheer our friends and astonish our enemies; and should encourage us to onward and persevering progress in the great work in which the Free Church is engaged.'

"At the General Assembly, and on the 2nd of June, 1845, Dr. Cunningham read the report of the College Committee (the revered Dr. Welsh having gone to his reward), in which it was stated that Dr. Welsh had succeeded in raising the £20,000 referred to in his letter of November last. Mr. Monteith read a report to the effect that £21,000 had been raised in all—£2000 from one contributor, and £19,000 from nineteen others. Mr. Monteith also reported with reference to the plans for the new building. Mr. Hog, of Newliston, at the same time made an interesting statement relative to a bursary fund which he had been exerting himself in raising for the benefit of young men preparing for the Free Church. After some discussion relative to these several reports, on the motion of Dr. Buchanan, the Moderator returned thanks to Dr. Cunningham, Mr. Monteith, and Mr. Hog. In the motion submitted by Dr. Buchanan, the following passage occurred:—'In reference to that part of the report which relates to the erection of suitable collegiate buildings, the Assembly have heard with the highest satisfaction and thankfulness that the munificent sum of £20,000, in sums of £1000 each, excepting one case, in which the subscription amounted to £2000, has been subscribed towards carrying this object into effect; and they remit to the Committee, of whose past proceedings they cordially approve, to proceed with all convenient speed towards the accomplishment of this important undertaking.'

"Before this subject was passed from, Mr. Sheriff Monteith stated, that although the raising of the £20,000 for the college from twenty individuals had been attributed to Dr. Welsh, and, no doubt it was in a great degree rightly attributed, still, the idea of the scheme did not originate with him, but with a gentleman to whom the Church owed much. A few days after

the Assembly of last year (probably the Commission in August), Dr. Welsh called upon him (Mr. M.), and stated that a scheme had been suggested to him whereby £20,000 could be obtained from twenty individuals for the College Fund, each paying £1000. He (Mr. M.) thought the proposal altogether visionary, but Dr. Welsh said that he had such confidence in Mr. Macdonald, of Blairgowrie, who was the person who suggested it—(hear hear)—that he would try its success, and that success was, that within six months he had the sum required (hear, hear)."

How the enterprise thus auspiciously begun was subsequently carried out it is not for us here to tell. The handsome buildings now seen at the head of the Mound were erected, after a design by Mr. Playfair, at an expense of £46,506. The New College has gathered round it endowments and funds which now amount to about £44,000. A library, containing 35,000 volumes of the most valuable literature, has been brought together. Upwards of 1300 students of divinity, intended for the ministry of the Free Church, have attended the Hall, and in addition to these, there have been 41 Scottish students of different denominations, 120 from Ireland, 14 from England, and 14 from Wales. The following also have attended from abroad—namely, from

Canada,	30
United States,	30
Cape of Good Hope,	20
Hungary,	15
Bohemia,	15
Italy,	11
France,	8
Switzerland,	4
Belgium,	2

A few from other nationalities, bring up the whole number of foreign students to 145.

But this is not all. Not only has the New College in Edinburgh been attended by a measure of success so gratifying, the Church has further reason to be thankful for the establishment of two sister colleges, the first at Aberdeen and the second at Glasgow. Into the history of these important

institutions we do not at present enter. They were built, and, to a large extent, endowed by the munificence of generous friends who felt the importance of having a Divinity Hall in each of these seats of learning. Thus, while many prayers have been going up to the Lord of the vineyard to send forth the needful labourers, the Church and her supporters have been enabled to show the sincerity of their prayers by those efforts and sacrifices through means of which ample opportunities have been provided for the education of all the youth of Scotland whose hearts are turned towards the work of the ministry.

The whole sums expended on these colleges and their endowments were stated in 1874 as amounting to £261,353, and they have since been increase .

XXVII. Manses.

Churches, and schools, and colleges were thus provided for; but there was yet another of those great enterprises requiring to be brought before the people—the Manse-building Scheme, which was destined to be so closely associated with the name of Dr. Guthrie.

In rural districts, as all Scotland knows, a manse for the minister is essential, not merely for his personal comfort, but that, dwelling in the midst of his flock, he may have ready means of access to the people. Accordingly, at the Disruption, where money could be found, there were parishes in which the church and the manse were seen rising together.

One instance of this we may take from the parish of Torphichen. Dr. Hetherington had held a prominent place as an able advocate of Free Church principles, through the press and from the platform; and the same energy which he had displayed during the conflict was conspicuous, both in himself and among his leading parishioners, after the battle was over. "The earth," it is stated, "was begun to be cleared away for the foundation of the church on the 12th day of June, and the church was opened for public worship on the 6th day of August, being the first Sabbath of that month, the whole having been completed within the short space of eight weeks. This almost unequalled rapidity was, under the blessing of God, owing to the remarkable activity and energy of Mr. David Macnair, by whom the whole work was managed. On the 24th day of August Mr. Hetherington entered into the manse, which was also ready for his reception; and on the 2nd day of October the new school was opened by Mr. Alex. Bethune, who had been chosen to be schoolmaster by the congregation after a public examination.

Thus, by the singular goodness of God to the people of Torphichen, theirs was the first church, the first manse, and the first school opened for public use in connection with the Free Church of Scotland; and this is here registered, not as a ground of boasting, but of fervent and grateful thanksgiving to that all-gracious God who wrought great things for them." *

Individual cases such as this, in which manses were built during the first summer, occurred in various parts of the country; but time was needed to bring home to the Church in general a sense of those hardships under which ministers were suffering. Already in a former section we have described the dwellings to which the families of the manse had to retire, involving in many cases trials almost as hard for the people to witness as for the ministers to bear. It may be right, however, to give some additional examples, in order to remind the reader of the extent to which such things prevailed all over the country.

There were localities in which the inconveniences were slight. "I have been badly situated for a residence," says Mr. Gibson, of Kirkbean; "sometimes under the necessity of living with one family, and sometimes with another. Now [1846] I am living with a large family for a time, and in a very small cottage, in every way uncomfortable for a minister's residence." †

A migratory life such as this had its discomforts, but frequently the trials were of a more serious kind. "Mr. Edmondston, of Ashkirk, was a man of much refinement and classical culture, in whom learning and piety were always exhibited in happy union. . . . When the Disruption became inevitable, he did not hesitate to surrender one of the few good livings in the south of Scotland—a beautiful manse and glebe, and the position of a parish minister, which, to one of his tastes and education, was more trying than the surrender of income. . . . Certain legal difficulties were interposed in the way of granting a site for a manse. Mr. Edmonston accordingly was obliged to take up his residence in a small house four miles

* Kirk-session Record, Torphichen.
† Disr. Mss. xxiii. p. 7.

distant from his church, and, being soon deprived of this, he had to remove to a damp, decayed farmhouse three miles farther distant. Under the excessive fatigue to which he had thus been exposed, and in this unhealthy residence, his health failed, and it was only after a lengthened sojourn at Harrogate that he was enabled to resume his ministerial labours. In 1845 he transferred his residence to Selkirk. Here he remained for fourteen years, subjected to all the inconvenience of carrying on his pastoral work at the distance of six miles from his flock. Few ministers suffered more. For nearly eight years he walked every Lord's day to his church and back, after preaching and holding a Sabbath school. He was accustomed to say, when remonstrated with, 'It is my Master's work, and I rejoice to do it.' But the fatigue and excitement proved too great a strain on his constitution, and he was again ordered to the south of England."*

In contrast to this and the cases which follow, it ought to be acknowledged that among the landlords of Scotland opposed to the Free Church there were some who acted a very generous part towards the outgoing ministers. One of these was the Marquis of Tweeddale, who, during the conflict, had resisted the claims of the Church, without, however, allowing any keenness of controversy to interfere with the kindness of private intercourse. In 1843 he was in India as Governor of Madras, but, opposed though he was to the Disruption, he did not forget his parish minister, for whose personal comfort in that time of trial he showed the most kind and thoughtful consideration.

Dr. Thomson, then of Yester, writes: "At first there seemed to be even greater difficulty in procuring a dwelling-house than in procuring a place for public worship. If Lord Tweeddale had been at home, I was sure that he would have given me one of his empty houses in the village for the accommodation of my family; but I was not sure that the factor—though he always acted a fair and honourable part—would feel at liberty to grant it. At that time, however—before the Disruption—I went to him to inquire if he could. He told me that he had just had a letter from his lordship at Madras, to say that he hoped I would

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Selkirk.

not leave the manse; but that if I did, I was to take any house of his that I might prefer. The factor offered me the choice of two houses, and pressed me to take the larger one; but I preferred the smaller cottage on account of its superior situation and view. I asked him what the rent would be. He replied that his instructions were that I was to sit rent-free. I demurred to this; and at length the difficulty was removed by his saying that it would be £6 yearly. So that, unlike many of my less favoured brethren, my difficulty was not about getting a house, but about inducing the owner to accept any rent for it. I have great pleasure in recording this, in gratitude to my noble patron, and also to his factor, Henry M. Davidson, Esq. In a week or two after the Disruption we quitted the manse; and this unquestionably was the most painful part of the whole process. It was done very rapidly by my worthy partner. In the morning I went to Haddington to attend a meeting of Presbytery, and when I returned in the evening, I found the manse empty and the cottage in beautiful order; so that I was almost inclined to say, like Dr. N. Paterson, of Glasgow, at the Convocation, that the lifeboat looked nearly as beautiful as the ship." *

Such acts of kindness should not be forgotten, though the contrast only sets other cases in a more painful light.

At Forgandenny, Mr Drummond states: "Before leaving home for the Disruption Assembly I arranged with a neighbour who had a couple of comfortable rooms to spare, to let us have them should we require them. And when the great event had actually taken place, I wrote to my wife, who remained in the manse during my absence, to remind that person of his promise, and to make sure that we should have the apartments. His answer was that he dared not, and plainly signified that he had been warned of the risk he would incur should he let them to us. . . .

"There being now no other suitable dwelling in the parish, we were obliged to take refuge in a small thatched cottage in the village, where we remained for upwards of four months, till the health of both of us began to suffer, and our medical

* Disr. Mss. lvii.

friend insisted that we should remove as speedily as possible. In that cottage we had but one small room for all purposes; our servant had to sleep and prepare our victuals in another cottage." *

The privations thus submitted to were often of the most painful kind. A much respected minister writes that, "when he and his family left the manse, they took up their abode in a house, . . . the only one they could get in the parish; and the place was so small that they had to pack two nurses and eight children into two beds which were scarcely large enough to hold two adults." †

It was not easy to exchange comfortable manses for such dwellings. How this was done in most cases we have already seen; but additional examples may be given, still further to show how such experiences were met, and especially what impressions were made on the children of the manse.

The Rev. Eric Findlater, at Lochearnhead, writes to his father: "I well remember the leaving of the manse. It was in a warm but dull July night. During the day all was excitement about the house, in consequence of the sale; but towards the evening the people had dispersed, and I accompanied the children in sight of the farm-house where they were to spend the night, but soon returned. At the manse I found none but yourself and my mother. You may remember, about this time the godly miller from Balnakeel came up, and that either he or yourself joined in prayer. I could do little else than traverse all the rooms in the house for the last time, which I did again and again, a hundred youthful and pleasing associations crowding upon me at every step. At length the miller departed. I remember that neither my mother nor you spoke much, and when you wished to lock the door, she insisted on doing so herself, and with her own hands quenching the dying embers of the nursery fire. Having done this, she turned the key in the door of that house in which she was born, and where she had spent the greater part of her life. Not a word was spoken. We then slowly walked away, and when outside the gate that

* Disr. Mss. liii. pp. 5-7.

† Assembly Proceedings, 1845, p. 242.

bounds the glebe, we stood for an instant and looked back—I trust, none of us in the spirit of Lot's wife—and then resumed our silent walk. I remember thinking at the time, when looking on you as a houseless old man that night, I felt prouder of having such a father than if I had seen you sitting in the house we had just left enjoying *otium cum dignitate*, but wanting the approbation of a good conscience, which at that moment I was convinced you enjoyed without the least alloy. As we proceeded to the inn, the people had too much of the fine feelings so characteristic of the poor Highlanders to allow them to make any open or noisy demonstration, though there was many a weeping eye and sobbing heart among them. When we arrived at the inn, my dear mother's courage, which had never failed during the hard ordeal of the previous days, now gave way, and got relief in a gush of womanly feeling in the privacy of her own chamber." * . . .

So also, at Crailing, Roxburghshire, the Rev. A. W. Milroy states: "It was a lovely evening in July when the manse was left. When all was ready, and they were about to start, my father gathered his family in the empty room, and then kneeling down, commended us all in prayer to God's keeping and love. Such times were never forgotten even by the youngest. Long afterwards my brother, who had knelt as a boy in that room, wrote, when embarking for Turkey for service in the Crimean war: 'I remember our father assembling us all in Crailing manse, and committing us to the care of our Heavenly Father. In like manner I now commit myself to His watchful love.'" †

But it is of the trials that were met with after the change that we have now to speak.

Only they who had seen Mr. Garioch in the manse of Old Meldrum can appreciate what he tells us of his new home:—"When my late wife and I, with our servants, left the manse of the Established Church at Meldrum, we took up our abode in what was called the stocking-house, probably from the purpose to which it had been applied by a former proprietor. . . . It consisted of four apartments—two on the

* Disr. Mss. lvii.

† Memorials of A Quiet Ministry, p. 40.

ground floor, which were used, one for the kitchen, and the other as a place for lumber; and two on the next floor, the one occupied as a sitting-room, and the other as our sleeping apartment. The larger part of the latter room was so low in the roof, and nothing above but the naked rafters, with a flooring over them, that I had to walk very warily, and to be careful lest I struck my head against one or other of them. There was also a sort of loft or garret above these, into which as much of our furniture as it could contain was packed, and the remainder not used by ourselves was received under safe custody by our kind neighbours and friends. While residing here, my dear wife was seized with typhus fever, under which, in this poor state of accommodation, she lay for several weeks; but, through the great mercy of our God, she was again restored to health; and to the praise and glory of His grace I can say that, during all the hardships of that period, we enjoyed the greatest peace and tranquillity of soul, and many tokens of the goodness of our Heavenly Father. One of our servants, while we were in this house, also had an attack of fever." *

The breaking up of families was another trial of that time, of which many examples might be given. In Aberdeenshire there were two brothers—Mr. Henry Simson, of Chapel of Garioch, and Mr. David Simson, of Oyne—who were held in high respect and esteem by all classes of society. "At Oyne, Mr. David Simson could not obtain a house to dwell in, in any part of the parish or neighbourhood. At last he got two small rooms and a bed-closet from a day-labourer, who occupied the old schoolhouse. This house had been condemned as unsafe several years before. The joists were quite gone, the stair was rotten and propped up. There were holes in the doors, some inches wide. The windows at times neither kept out rain, wind, nor snow. A great part of the roof was twice blown off while he possessed it. Still it was the only house in the parish that could be obtained. Mr. Simson was thankful to get it, and lived in it for nearly six years." †

In regard to Mr. Henry Simson, it is stated that "the evil which he felt most keenly was the difficulty he experienced in

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Garioch. † *Ibid.*

providing in the scene of his labours a suitable residence for himself and his family. He often mourned over his protracted separation from them. . . . He was under the necessity of sending his wife and their numerous young family to Aberdeen, a distance of twenty miles, where they had to remain three years; while he, during that period, in order to reside in the midst of his flock, was constrained to betake himself to lodgings of a very insufficient and uncomfortable description, granted by a farmer. The proprietor, however, did not approve of this, and gave notice to the farmer that this would not be permitted, and desired him to inform Mr. Simson that he must remove, which accordingly he was obliged to do. He then got a small, damp cottage, in another part of the parish in which he had faithfully laboured for no less a period than twenty-six years, and there, we believe, he contracted a disease which resulted in his death." *

Another trying case was that of Mr. Inglis, at Edzell. "On the 20th of June I and my family left the manse, and went to a house in the village, where we had very insufficient accommodation. We had only three small apartments and two very small closets. The largest apartment was about ten feet square, and when the family assembled for worship there was barely room to kneel round a small table in the middle of the room. A place for a kitchen was fitted up in an outhouse forty yards away from the room where we took our meals. We were directly opposite the inn, and visitors there were much amused for years to see the dinner of the Free Church minister and his family carried up a lane and down a street to the place where they dwelt. They always saw, however, that we were neither starved nor starving, as some of our Moderate friends and fearful supporters anticipated that we would be; but, on the contrary, that we really were getting something to eat and keep us alive. The rooms that we occupied would only hold a very small part of my furniture, and the bulkiest and best of it was sent to friends' houses in the neighbourhood. It thus happened to be in three different parishes, and two different counties. I used to joke a good deal about this, and speak of

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Garioch.

my town and two country residences, in the one of which I could sit upon my own chairs, and in the other stretch my legs under my own mahogany. . . . The insufficient accommodation in which I and my family were cooped up at length produced the inevitable consequence. Gastric fever broke out amongst us. I escaped it myself, but I was for six weeks prevented from putting off my clothes, as some of those who were in the fever needed constant attendance by night as well as day. My health, in consequence of this night-work and want of rest, together with my anxiety about those who were ill, began to give way. The Rev. Mr. Nixon, of St. John's, Montrose, on a friendly visit which he paid me, saw the state I was in, and resolved that it should be endured no longer." *

It is not to be wondered at if, under such a strain, painful results frequently followed. The case of Mr. Davidson, of Kilmalie, was formerly referred to, and the hardships under which his wife's health gave way, and her life was ultimately sacrificed. Five times he had to change his temporary places of residence, refusing to leave his people, though the wretched accommodation with which he was content was again and again taken from him. "He was driven to Fort-William, over an arm of the sea, which he had to cross in an open boat on every occasion on which he visited his people. . . . The heart of this worthy man filled, and he burst into tears when he spake of his trials; . . . yet he makes little complaint. He expresses his determination to remain by his people, and even speaks kindly of those that have done him wrong." † But the inevitable consequences followed. "I was suddenly laid low with a dangerous illness, which brought on a stroke of paralysis, in consequence of which I was laid aside from my work for a period of twelve months, during which period my pulpit was supplied partly by the kindness of friends, and partly by probationers appointed by the Church." ‡ "It was an illness," says one who knew him well, "from which he never thoroughly recovered." §

* Memorials of Disruption in Edzell, by the Rev. R. Inglis, pp. 16, 42.
† *Free Church Mag.* ii. 199. ‡ Parker Mss., Presb. of Abertarff.
§ *Home and Foreign Missionary Record*, 1872, p. 57.

But not only did disease enter these desolate homes; there was death, as the above extracts show. We have recorded the cases of Baird of Cockburnspath, and the Mackenzies of Tongue, described by Dr. Guthrie. Additional instances might still be mentioned, as, for example, Mr. Thomson, of Peterculter—a young minister of high promise, who was believed to have died of the damp of an unhealthy cottage, the only residence he could obtain in the midst of his people.

The sight of such things going on in the country roused men's feelings. At Edzell, the condition of Mr. Inglis and his family led to a movement, headed by Mr. Nixon, in which many friends took part. Contributions were raised throughout the Synod; a feu was purchased in the village, at a price beyond its value; and a commodious cottage was built and presented to the minister.

The feeling thus roused in Forfarshire by an individual case was already stirring all over the country. One of the leading elders, Mr. Thomson, of Banchory, was the first to move, declaring in the Assembly of 1844 that it was a state of things not to be borne. A committee, consisting of none but laymen, was appointed; and a subscription list was opened, the Dowager Marchioness of Breadalbane and Mr. Campbell, of Tilliechewan, leading the way with donations of £500 each. But while the laity were thus eager, the ministers generally regarded the movement as premature. Precedence must be given to the appeals of Mr. Macdonald and Dr. Welsh. They therefore laid an arrest upon the proposed efforts, resolving that "until the Church's necessary machinery was all in working order they would not allow their personal comfort to be consulted." The progress of such movements, however, in those days was rapid. Within a year all that was asked for those schemes had been subscribed, the way was clear, and in May, 1845, it was felt that the building of manses must be set about in serious earnest.

That the cause was good no one could doubt, the only thing required was an advocate to do for it what Mr. Macdonald had done for the schools and Dr. Welsh for the college. A most fortunate choice it was when—on the suggestion, it is believed, of Dr. Chalmers—Dr. Guthrie was called to undertake the work. It

would be difficult to say whether the cause was more fortunate in its advocate, or the advocate in his cause. That oratory, of which he was a consummate master, could nowhere have found a theme more congenial or better fitted to call out the powers with which he was gifted, and never could the cause have found one whose pleadings and appeals were so sure to urge home its claims on the hearts of men. On the last day of May, 1845, he stood before the Assembly, and, in the act of accepting his commission, he declared that for such an object he was prepared to spend and be spent. "I go forth on the promise of God's Word, . . . the best guarantee for the goodness of a cause, and the best means of raising the sympathy of the human heart." *

Several weeks were needed to make preparation for a period of absence so prolonged, but on the 9th of July all was ready, and he left to begin operations in Glasgow. Dr. Buchanan will remember, he afterwards said, he met me at the railway terminus, and saw me with nothing but a flower in my buttonhole. I knew that I had a good cause; I knew that I had good clients. "I showed no little common sense in going to Glasgow first. I understand very little of music, but I understand enough to know that if you begin to sing in a low key, you cannot easily get up to a higher one; and it is with *money* as with *music*—if you begin on a low key, you cannot get up without great difficulty." †

Very generously did the friends of the Free Church in that city justify this confidence. At first, the intention at headquarters had been to raise £50,000, but before a single step was taken, the friends in Glasgow—prominent among whom was Professor Rainy, M.D.—earnestly urged that the sum aimed at should be raised to £100,000. Aided by such hearty support, Dr. Guthrie began his work; and he was soon able to say, "I have spent three of the happiest days I ever spent in my life in this city. I have gone from house to house, and from counting-room to counting-room, and I have found no cold looks, but genuine kindness. I have often been told, 'Oh, Mr. Guthrie, there is no use in making a speech. We are quite prepared

* Assembly Proceedings, 1845. Edinburgh, p. 241.
† Life of Dr. Guthrie, vol. ii. p. 74.

for you, sir; where's your book?'" The result of these three days was just £10,000; and he was able, six weeks afterwards, to tell the Assembly at Inverness that in Glasgow and its neighbourhood he had raised upwards of £35,000. Cheered by such success, Dr. Guthrie went on his way to encounter the incessant toil of the next ten months, during which "he visited thirteen Synods, fifty-eight Presbyteries, and several hundreds of separate congregations, in many cases preaching the Gospel, always making a fervent appeal of an hour or more for his manse scheme. In the more important places he spent the following day in making personal visits, subscription-book in hand. . . .

"The speeches which Mr. Guthrie delivered during these months would of themselves fill a volume; and although the main burden of them all was necessarily similar, one is struck, in reading them, by his versatility in adapting his remarks, pathetic or humourous, to the locality, the time, and the class which he addressed."*

The writer may be allowed to refer to the only meeting of the series at which he was personally present—that held at Fordoun, where Dr. Guthrie was the guest of Captain Burnet, of Monboddo. The district was not far from Brechin and Arbirlot. Dr. Guthrie well knew the class of people, and never did he show more signally the rare power with which he could adapt himself to his audience, and the resistless influence which he wielded, both in the sermon and the address. The result greatly exceeded his expectations. Before going to the meeting, after dining at Monboddo, he had been "somewhat disconcerted by the evident flurry and annoyance into which Captain Burnet was thrown by the disappearance of a pair of spectacles. 'Too bad! too bad!' he exclaimed more than once; 'these glasses cost me fourteen shillings last year in London, and now the money's gone.' This don't look well for my subscription-book to-night, was my mental reflection," added Dr. Guthrie, in telling the story; "if the loss of a pair of spectacles be counted so serious, how am I to look for £50? But what was my surprise and delight when Captain Burnet headed the list,

* Life of Dr. Guthrie, vol. ii. p. 76.

after my speech, with a subscription of £200 to the manse fund." *

Moving thus from place to place all over the country, and raising contributions differing greatly in amount, from the minimum of £5 up to Lord Breadalbane's munificent subscription of £5000, Dr. Guthrie finished this great undertaking by reporting to the Assembly of 1846 that he had raised £116,370 from 6610 subscribers, being an average of £19 from each. It was a great success, and all the greater because the money had been freely and generously given. "I could bring before you," he said, addressing the Assembly, "many instances in which I have actually restrained people from subscribing. I may mention one instance, which Mr. Buchanan, of Glasgow, will remember. He and I waited upon a lady in Glasgow, and told her that we had come, not to urge her to give, but to prevent her, when she was called upon, from giving too much. In fact, wherever I went I was cordially received; and I found that I was no beggar at all. I had no more to do than to mention my errand, and the people at once subscribed. Ours, sir, were the generous grapes which yield the wine freely, and not the husks to which they need to apply

* Captain Burnet deserves to be remembered as one of the very few landed proprietors in Kincardineshire who stood by the Free Church. Grandson of the famous Lord Monboddo, along with some trace of eccentricity, he inherited no small share of the family talent. For a considerable number of years he had openly taken his stand on the side of Christ, and when the Disruption came, it seemed fairly to open his heart. Notices like the following, which appeared from time to time in the local newspapers, showed what he was:—"The Deacons' Court of Laurencekirk have thankfully to acknowledge the grant of £40 from Captain Burnet, of Monboddo, whereby the entire debt of their neat and commodious church has been extinguished. This is but one of the many acts of generosity which this Christian-minded gentleman has done to this and other congregations of the Free Church in this quarter." Quoted in *Witness*, 9th August, 1845. Dr. Chalmers, after three days spent at Monboddo in 1843, makes this entry in his diary: "I took leave, with much feeling, of the whole family, children and all. I have been treated with the greatest cordiality, and I owe nothing to the Captain but the utmost gratitude and respect. What a difference it would make in Scotland if we had one such as he within every ten miles of each other."—Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers, vol. iv. p. 361.

the screw. So far from pressing, I have often been struck with the way in which many a one put down his subscription; and when my heart was full, and I was ready to say, Thank you, sir, many and many a time I have been answered, 'You are not to thank us, Mr. Guthrie, but we have to thank you for giving us the opportunity to subscribe.'" *

The money thus raised was energetically administered by the committee of management. The subscriptions were spread over five years, during which the fund was gathered in; but before the third year had closed it was reported that 409 manses were already built or in progress. To each of these the grant from the general fund was from £150 to £200, the rest being left for local subscriptions. From year to year the work went forward, till in 1870 Dr. Buchanan was able to state that 719 manses had been completed, at a cost of £467,350.

This great enterprise thus successfully wrought out has proved in every point of view an unspeakable blessing to the Free Church.

It was a welcome relief to the hearts of many among the laity when they saw their ministers taken out of those comfortless and unhealthy cottages into which they had been driven.

It gave stability to the cause of the Free Church. "The very name of a manse carries permanency with it. It so happens," said Dr. Guthrie, "that I lately met a man who was a keen opponent of the Free Church, and he said that he thought that the Free Church was getting into a highly dangerous position. As long as she merely built churches he was not afraid of her; she was like a vessel lying in a bay which might be driven out to sea after all; but if she got manses too, she would become like a ship dropping anchor, and which there was little chance of driving back to sea again."

"It added to the comfort of the minister, supplementing his stipend to the extent of £30 or £40, not rising or falling, but fixed and sure.

"It strengthened his hands for ministerial work in the midst of his people. This was specially true of the brethren in country districts. On them the burden and heat of the day

* Assembly Proceedings, 1846, p. 189.

has lain. It fell comparatively little on us who were in the town. . . . We saw the wave of the Disruption coming upon us—we faced it boldly—it broke over us—and we were little the worse of it. But it was different in country parishes; the wave of the Disruption came, they saw it plainly, and they faced it boldly; but it broke over them, and left many of them amid the wreck of their worldly all. . . . I rejoice, among other things, that comfort is coming to them, and that it is not far away."

There was but one painful circumstance connected with all this—the effect which the labours of these months produced on the health of Dr. Guthrie. "No one," said Dr. Buchanan, "who was in any way cognisant of his labours, who witnessed the energy with which he threw his whole heart and soul into that movement, who had occasion to observe the extraordinary amount not merely of mental energy, but of bodily strength, given to that cause—none who is acquainted with these circumstances can fail to trace no small measure of the weakness which he now [1848] suffers, to his labours on that great occasion."* As years passed on these effects were much alleviated, and if the results of such toil were never wholly removed, Dr. Guthrie had at least the satisfaction of feeling that, though he had spent his strength, it was not spent in vain. Over all broad Scotland there were hundreds of pleasant homes, which, but for that Manse Scheme, would never have been built. The ministers of the Free Church had their comforts largely increased, and, what was far more important, they were enabled to live among their people—having access to the families and doing the pastoral work—feeding the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers.

* Assembly Proceedings, 1848, p. 271.

XXVIII. Trials of the People.

It is no pleasant task to speak of the trials to which so many of the people were subjected on leaving the Establishment. The ten and a-half millions sterling * which they have contributed in free-will offerings to the cause of their Church have sufficiently proved how deep and abiding their convictions must have been; but not less was this attested, even at the outset, by the steadfastness with which hardships of many different kinds were unflinchingly endured.

The hostile feeling of adversaries was sometimes seen in matters of very small account. "In a parish by no means so far as 100 miles from Cockburnspath, . . . some time ago a small rustic bridge, formed of rude planks covered with turf, which furnished a passage to the members of the Free Church over a burn on their way to their place of worship, was found one morning burned to the water-edge. As it was discovered that after this the refractory Free Church goers had succeeded in getting across the burn at a place where it divided itself into two streams, this was ingeniously prevented in all time coming by converting the two streams into one." †

At Roslin, Mr. Brown preached from a tent in the old Roman Catholic burying-ground for eighteen successive Sabbaths. On one of the Sabbaths "three elderly men, having the appearance of gentlemen, visited Roslin, and spent the day in a variety of amusements, and having dined at the inn, they went to the old graveyard and overturned the tent, left it lying in fragments, and then left in great haste for Edinburgh." ‡

* The exact sum in 1874 was £10,723,102, 15s. 11d.

† *Witness*, 2nd August, 1845.

‡ Paper by the Rev. Mr. Brown, Parker Mss., Presb. of Dalkeith.

"There is a certain southern parish, where the Free Church people gathered from great distances, in a thinly peopled district, for public worship. The summer of 1843 was warm and dry, and that congregation found unto'd comfort in a fine spring of cool delicious water, which issued from a bank by the roadside, near their place of meeting. This was observed. The proprietor of the soil had a drain dug, and *cut off the spring.* Such things are remembered still." *

These annoyances, after all, were of little importance; but soon matters took a more serious form. Sometimes the trial came in the shape of threats, by landlords, and factors, and employers attempting to establish something like a reign of terror.

"Immediately after the Disruption," says Mr. Forbes, of Woodside, "the female collectors who worked at the cotton factory were told that if they continued to act in that capacity they would be dismissed from their work. Others, accordingly, took their places, until the indignation of the parties in question somewhat cooled, which it soon did." †

"One of my heritors [at Lesmahagow] met a working-man, who was the proprietor of a single tenement, and said to him, 'Peter, if you join these Free Church folks, you will lose your house—all will be taken from you to pay law expenses.' The plain working-man was somewhat disconcerted by this appeal to his fears, and forthwith repeated the matter to his wife, who had a firmer faith. She encouraged her husband, and said, 'Never mind, Peter; just say to the gentleman, better lose our house than lose our souls.'" ‡

Dr. Simpson, of Kintore, states: "Both the principal heritors were avowedly hostile, but they never directly interfered with the members of the Free Church, so far as is known to me. Very unscrupulous use, however, was made of the late Lord Kintore's name by ——, who did all he could to intimidate the smaller tenants. Grievous complaints of this interference were made to me by several of the parties thus heartlessly—and, as I believe, without authority—assailed and threatened. Though most of the people stood firm under these attacks, there can

* Life of Dr. Cunningham, p. 194.

† Disr. Mss. xxvii. p. 11. ‡ Disr. Mss. xxxi. p. 20.

be no doubt that some timid persons gave way before the temptation." *

"I know of one instance," said Mr. Carment, of Rosskeen, "in which a pious parishioner in the North was willing to accommodate her pastor and his family in her house. She was told that if she did so it would be to her hurt. Her answer was, 'Well, I cannot help it, although it be to my hurt—although you should send me to jail for it. I must and will receive that servant of the Lord.'" †

In one of the rural districts of a southern parish there lived a poor woman on the barony of the chief resident heritor. "She alone of all the people on the estate joined the Free Church. Of course, such a bold step was instantly marked by him who seemed resolved that there should be but one conscience in all the barony. A message was openly sent through her son, given to him by the proprietor's own lips in the midst of a number of workmen engaged on a bridge, for the purpose, I suppose, of striking terror into all, 'that her husband (he was then upwards of fourscore years of age) must seek another house at the term, if his wife did not cease going to the Free Church.' In the house to which this message was brought there lived at the time the patriarch of upwards of eighty years and his little grandchild—the fifth generation in the house and on the property. When the message was given in the evening, the spirited woman said to her husband, 'Wattie, it's now come to this—we must decide between keeping this house and getting a right and a readiness for the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' 'Aweel, then,' said the old patriarch, 'the thing's soon decided—gang where your conscience bids; I would gang wi' ye, if I could gang onywhere. He whom we seek to serve will aye keep some house abune our heads as lang as we're here.' She went, as usual, in the face of the proprietor and all his dependents. She abides in the house. It was too strong a step to take in the light of day, to turn out the oldest residenters on the property, the more especially as the old man soon took his last illness."

* Parker Mss., Paper by Rev. Dr. Simpson, Kintore.

† *Witness*, 4th November, 1843.

But these threats were not confined to labourers and domestics. Farmers also were to be influenced—sometimes indirectly, and at other times by distinct warnings.

Mr. Brown, of Largo, refers to certain of his heritors whose object was to discountenance the members of the Free Church. "They were threatened with the loss of employment, and tenants who were in arrears with the loss of all favour, and no doubt there were those of both classes earnest supporters of the Free Church who had come out, and yet afterwards returned to the Establishment for such reasons." *

"Different cases of intimidation exercised on the part of landlords towards their tenants have been mentioned to me. One landlord intimated to the farmers on his estate that it would be for their advantage to have nothing to do with the Free Church and that they should remain, like himself, where they were."†

In another district the intimation was made more distinctly, in a different way. "There lives, west from Stirling, but not within ten miles of the Parliamentary burgh, a certain landed proprietor, who has been receiving rent from his tenants.‡ At this audit, as it is called in England, a strange scene happened. When a tenant appeared who still adhered to the Kirk, he was received with a cheerful countenance and a hearty shake of the hand, and 10 per cent. of his rent was returned, with best wishes that it might prosper in his hands. But when a luckless wight§ made his appearance who had adhered to the Free Church, the landlord left the room, and the tenant had his rent to pay to the factor, who had no authority to return him one farthing, but he must pay the whole sum, plack and bawbee, without one single smile from the dignitary, or one wish for his prosperity."‖

When Mr. M'Leod, of Maryborough, went to preach among the parishes of Strathspey, the state of matters was such as is difficult to conceive of. The opposition came from hostile local officials, urged on by the clergy of the Established Church, and "manifested itself in every shape and form. The tents erected in the open air for his preaching were often thrown down at night, the people were interfered with on the high roads when

* Disr. Mss. xlv.
† Disr. Mss. xxxi. p. 17.
‡ Mr. Stirling, of Carden.
§ Alexander Blair, elder, F.C., Gartmore.
‖ *Witness*, 29th July, 1843.

assembling for public worship, every species of annoyance was resorted to, from low threats and insinuations to gross misrepresentations in the public prints. Factors visited tenants, exhibiting a document called the black list, to inform them that they were taking up the names of all that would attend the Free Church, to be produced at the expiry of their leases. Shop-keepers were told that they would forfeit the custom and countenance of the wealthy and influential in the country. Servants of every description holding situations, from the local manager or grieve down to the herd, were threatened with deprivation of office and service. Feuars who signified their intention to grant ground for the Free Church congregation to worship on, had their charters demanded and their rights questioned. Wood merchants were interfered with for selling wood for any Free Church purpose." *

Such threats were not uttered without the full intention of carrying them into effect. "I saw two servants in livery at the tent," says Hugh Miller. "They are, I have been told, domestics of ——, a fierce Intrusionist, and have been warned to quit his service at the term for their adherence to the Free Church."†

"Only yesterday, we heard of a most respectable aged widow who had been just turned away from her employment by the factor of a south-country nobleman, and, after a lifetime of hard service on the estate, thrown on the charity of a married daughter, solely on the ground that she had allowed the worship of God to be conducted in her house by a Free Church minister." ‡

"I know an instance in which a servant was turned off for no other reason than his adherence to the Free Church. When he asked his master if he had not always proved a faithful servant to him, what was his master's reply? 'Oh yes, you have always proved a faithful, honest servant, but I cannot keep you if you will not leave those ministers.' 'Sir,' retorted the servant, 'if I give up my conscience for food and clothing, you could trust but little to my honesty.'" §

* Parker Mss., Statement by Rev. Mr. M'Leod, p. 5.
† Life, vol. ii. p. 384. ‡ *Witness*, 23rd September, 1843.
§ *Witness*, 4th November, 1843, Mr. Carment.

"Our difficulties," says Mr. Taylor, of Flisk, Fifeshire, "came thick upon us; many of the neighbouring proprietors were roused to opposition by the extent of the movement. Mr. ——, of ——, prevented his cottars and dependants from worshipping with us, and those who were resolute in their adherence he dismissed from his grounds and service, ostensibly for other reasons, but this was known to be the real one. He traces his lineal descent from Claverhouse." *

"The spirit of the Moderates," again writes Hugh Miller, from Cromarty, "in this part of the country is bitterness itself. Servants dismissed, labourers thrown out of employment, angry interviews between landlord and tenant—we hear of little else in this corner." †

But the extent to which all this was carried may perhaps be best learned from a statement of Mr. Hamilton, convener of the Building Committee, when giving in his report in May, 1844:—"The committee do not intend at present to bring forward details. . . . They will only select as a specimen a single sentence, contained in a letter lately received from a most respectable minister, who, speaking of his own parish, says: 'About fifty servants and day-labourers, several of them with weak families and destitute of means, have been dismissed and thrown out of employment, and everything done against them to render their adherence bitter. Yesterday, in addition to the servants removed at last term, about twenty more, with their families, were served with summonses of removal for supporting and attending the Free Church; while such as agree to oppose it are called from distant parishes to supply their places, and are encouraged and protected, whatever character they bear.'" ‡

There was much to regret in the state of society which all this was fitted to produce; but in every part of Scotland there are stories innumerable of how fearlessly the old Scottish spirit of independence rose to resist such attempts at oppression, showing at the same time the enlightened attachment of the people to what they believed to be the cause of God and of truth.

For the most part, the resistance was as quiet as it was firm.

* Disr. Mss. xxxvii. p. 11. † Life, vol. ii. p. 376.
‡ Assembly Proceedings, 1844, p. 229.

Mr. Middleton of Torosay, Mull, writes: "In the year 1843 I was treating with Colonel —— about a farm; and when speaking of the sheep stock upon it, I got a plain enough hint that it might be mine were I to leave off certain divisive courses, as some termed the Free Church movement. But I was enabled through grace to resist, and have had no cause to repent since, either on the score of principle or of worldly profit; for by following the path of duty I have had a clear conscience, and Providence has since prospered me in my worldly circumstances more than during any previous period of my life." *

At Latheron, where the people had stood out against all hostile influence, the leading heritor, who was "highest in rank as well as in zeal for Moderatism, resolved to make one more attempt before yielding. His farm-grieve, who was also manager of his extensive estate, had been with him for a great many years—probably not less than twenty—and on his services he placed the highest possible value; but he having adhered to the Free Church, it might perhaps be supposed that his example had influenced the other servants and tenants also, so it was resolved to select him for the first assault. One day, therefore, his master called him, and having stated how much annoyed he was that he and all the other servants and tenants had left the good old Kirk, how long they had been together, and how well pleased and satisfied he always had been with him, he added, 'I fear this foolish breach will be the means of separating us, unless you come back to the Kirk; for it will never do for me and you to be going to different kirks; so think of it and come with me, and we will continue good friends, as we have always been.' The poor grieve was, of course, taken a little by surprise; but, being a man of good sense and resolution, as well as firmness, he at length said that he was sorry that his honour—for he was an honourable—had thought of interfering in a matter of this kind; that they certainly had been long together; that he felt he had endeavoured to serve him faithfully to the best of his ability, and was willing to do so still; but that if this was to depend on his

* Disr. Mss. ix. p. 4.

joining the Establishment in its now altered state, he was quite ready, rather than do so, to leave his honour's service at the first term. This decided and suitable reply settled the whole matter, and saved the other servants from being interfered with; for the grieve's services were too valuable to be dispensed with, and he was never again questioned on the subject." *

"Mr. ——, who held an extensive sheep-farm in one of the parishes of Sutherland, was very desirous that all in his employment should adhere to the Establishment. One day in the summer of 1843, when his shepherds had occasion to meet at sheep-washing or sheep-shearing, he rode up to the place, accompanied by his son; and, addressing "the manager," said that he had brought a paper for them all to sign. He was going to a distant part of his farm, and would call for it on his return, when he expected to find that all had signed it. The paper contained the following declaration—"We, the undersigned, adhere to the Established Church of Scotland." † When Mr. —— and his son had left, the manager (an excellent and very intelligent man), addressed the shepherds—"Well, men, I know what I'll do; but don't let me influence you. What do you say? Will you sign?" An emphatic and unanimous "No!" was the reply. "Well, but," continued the manager, "don't you think that it would be more respectful to sign *something*, rather than to return the paper blank?" and, turning up the other side of the paper, he wrote—"We, the undersigned, adhere to the Free Church of Scotland." This he himself signed first, and then all the shepherds adhibited their names.

When Mr. —— and his son rode back, he asked the manager —"Well, is that paper signed by you all?" "Yes, sir," replied the manager. "We have all signed it, but *on the other side.*" Mr. —— turned the paper round, examined it silently, pocketed it, and rode off without uttering a word. He never afterwards gave the slightest annoyance to any of his shepherds because of their adherence to the Free Church." ‡

* Parker Mss., Paper by Rev. Mr. Davidson, p. 16.

† Then followed the signatures of Mr. —— and his son.

‡ Communicated by the Rev. A. M'Gillivray, Roseburn, Edinburgh.

Sometimes the interference was not only resisted, but resented as unrighteous. Lord Kinnoull, with whom the fatal Auchterarder litigation originated, was not content with doing battle in the civil courts, but, aided by a zealous factor, he carried the war among his own dependants and day-labourers. The following will illustrate the spirit of the time :—During the Ten Years' Conflict, Church-defence associations were formed in many parishes, one of the objects being to raise funds to meet the expenses of litigation, deputations, &c., needful during the controversy. One of these associations was formed in Aberdalgie, Perthshire, under the direction of the parish minister. This soon reached the ears of the factor, who endeavoured to put a stop to it by threatening with ejection from his lordship's service all who should subscribe to any such fund. The following conversation took place "between the factor and the only surviving elder of the parish, as it was reported to the minister by the elder himself:—

"*Factor.* I hear the minister is raising money by subscription from the parishioners. Why is he doing this? Into whose pocket does the money go?

"*Elder.* I understand it is for the purpose of defraying the expenses of publishing information among the people on the Non-intrusion controversy.

"*F.* Do you subscribe to the funds, David?

"*E.* Yes, sir, I do.

"*F.* Do you know if any of Lord Kinnoull's work-people or retainers subscribe to this scheme of the minister?

"*E.* Yes, I do; almost all of them are subscribers to it.

"*F.* Will you give me their names, as they are not to be allowed to continue in his lordship's employment if they subscribe.

"*E.* You can ask themselves, sir, as you have asked me.

"*F.* Oh yes, to be sure I can; but it would save me trouble if you were to mention them.

"*E.* Am I to understand that because I am a subscriber to the Church Defence Fund, you intimate now to me that I am dismissed from Lord Kinnoull's service?

"*F.* Not just yet; I'll give you timely warning of your dismissal.

"*E.* Perhaps it will save his lordship and you the trouble of doing so, if I inform you now that it is my intention to leave his lordship's service at next term.

"*F.* Oh, very well.

"The elder here referred to was house-carpenter to the Earl of Kinnoull, a godly man. . . . The old man died in 1872 at an advanced age, in his native parish of Forgandenny, beloved and respected as a Christian man, and an elder of the Free Church."*

A similar spirit was exhibited in a case which occurred farther south, where conscience was attempted to be overborne. The lady to whom a large part of the parish belonged "had a superior servant as forester, who had been born and brought up on the property, and was the special favourite of her late husband, by whom he was respected and trusted in everything. He had the boldness to join the Free Church. The factor, who knew his worth, came to him, and told him that the step had given the deepest displeasure, and that if he did not return to the Establishment, he would certainly lose his place, her resentment was so great. 'This comes well from her, who is a dissenter herself, and doing more to ruin the Establishment, by building an Episcopalian chapel, than anybody else. But you may tell her, if she thinks I will make a worse servant by trying to be a servant of God according to my own conscience, I am as ready to part with her as she can be to part with me.' He was too good a servant, and too indispensable to the property, to be dismissed. Though all the wonted marks of favour were withdrawn, he was continued in his place."

It must not, however, be supposed that, in all cases, this spirit of hostility failed to reach its victims. John Smith was the Marquis of Bute's head-gardener at Mount Stuart. He was a remarkable man of God, of whom William Burns says, "His memory was sweet to many, and to me also, . . . as I had often enjoyed the solemn privilege of visiting his abode, and being benefited by his heavenly converse and prayers." At the Disruption he was cast out of his situation for following the Free Church. He had held many meetings for prayer at Kilchattan Bay, and when debarred by the factor from the people's houses, he hired a room in the inn, and met them there. "He was in the act of beginning one of these meetings when the letter was put into his hands which dismissed him from his place." In 1846 Mr. Burns found his widow at Rothesay, in a cottage

* Disr. Mss. xl.

which he had built in the midst of a garden, rented and cultivated in his last days for his support. She was unwell and in difficulties, as her husband had always been open-handed, saying, *the Marquis would not see him want.* Mr. Burns was able to give assistance for the time by handing over "a few pounds" which the people had raised for himself, but which he said he doubted not God intended for her. "She wept as she received it." *

One of the most painful parts of this painful subject was the treatment to which paupers were subjected, in the attempt to use the poor's funds as a means of overbearing their conscience, and forcing them in their helplessness to attend the Established Church. A general statement on this point was made by Mr. Dunlop at the Assembly of 1844:—"It seems that in some instances poor people, influenced by the common sympathy which has been so generally evinced towards the Free Church, have been desirous to share the privilege of contributing their mite—the merest trifle—at the sacrifice of some little thing which they call a luxury, such as tobacco, and thus be enabled to put a halfpenny into the plate on collection day. . . . We do not ask these contributions, by any means, nor do we expect them; but it would be a cruelty to refuse to take anything when offered in the feeling that accompanies them. Well, inquiries are in many cases now instituted, whether or not the poor people give anything in this shape to the Free Church, or to any other congregation with which they are connected, and it has been proposed by the heritors that in any case where a pauper is found to contribute to the Free Church he shall be cut off the roll."†

At Lairg, Sutherlandshire, they fell on an ingenious device. The day of the sacramental fast of the Free Church was appointed as the day for the *yearly* distribution of poor's money. Few of the paupers attended, and such as did not attend, received no allowance.‡

* See the full account in the Life of Rev. W. C. Burns, pp. 320, 321.

† Assembly Proceedings, 1844, p. 151.

‡ *Witness*, 2nd September, 1843.

Individual cases of refusal and of threats are spoken of as occurring in various parts of the country.

At Gartly, owing to "the hostility of the Duke of Richmond—the sole proprietor of the parish—and his factors, together with the means used by some of the Moderates in the parish (a small minority, but influential in point of worldly status) with those who wanted strength of principle, not a few who subscribed their adherence to the Church were induced to draw back." Mr. Robertson mentions the case of "an old woman—a pauper, who was imbecile—she was threatened that if she continued a hearer of the Free Church she would get no allowance from the poor's fund. Well, well, she replied, I'll follow Christ." *

In another locality we are told: "Even the paupers were not thought beneath the arts of some of the heritors. At their meetings, and in the act of administering public funds drawn from all parties, some of them insisted upon knowing whether the poor persons went to the Free Church, and whether they gave anything to its funds, with looks and tones which left a very distinct impression that all in such connection would be deprived of their legal allowance. All the paupers, accordingly, with the exception of a very few, remain in the Establishment. The following fact may be relied upon. It was told by the young woman who is all but silly, yet a real saint withal. The heritors' clerk, who managed the small property on which she usually worked, came to her one day, and said that unless she ceased to attend the Free Church, the work would be taken from her; and not only so, but the aliment from her old widowed bed-rid mother, one of the paupers, who lived with her. Her reply was, she could not help them doing what they liked with her mother and her; there was One who would take care of them. One thing only she had to care for, and that was to gang where her Master bid her."

At Errol, Dr. Grierson states: "It is painful to add that there have been instances in which the private gratuities distributed to the poor at the time of Christmas were rigidly withheld from those individuals, however destitute, who attended my ministrations. . . . Their reply was, Well, poor as we are,

* Disr. Mss. xvii. p. 3.

we will not sell our consciences for a peck of meal or a firlot of coals." *

"I felt the utmost indignation, not long ago," says Dr. Begg, "when a devout old woman came into my house and told me the following tale. She said that she and her ancestors had been servants in the family of a nobleman for many generations —she was above seventy—but the other night, said she, I allowed a preacher of the Free Church to come into my house and conduct the worship of God, and next morning, at ten o'clock, I was dismissed from my employment, and I am now houseless and destitute in the world." †

Thus among the very humblest ranks of society the spirit of hostility sought to overbear the consciences of those who seemed to be defenceless. But it is strange to observe how some of the highest and noblest in the land were subjected to similar treatment.

In June, 1845, the Duchess of Gordon wrote: "I believe you judge very truly, that the honour from man I have so long enjoyed and cherished will be much withdrawn." "The penalty for worshipping Christ was no longer to be summoned before the judges, and to be fined like her ancestor, Lady Mary Brodie; but it was to stand on a pinnacle alone, bearing His reproach. To give a single instance: she had a visit from Lord Aberdeen, who, after the controversy had terminated in the Disruption, was most liberal in his own district in granting sites and otherwise, but was naturally vexed at the new position taken by the Duchess. He reasoned with her earnestly on the line of conduct she had adopted; and when his arguments failed, he remonstrated with a warmth unlike the usual amiableness of his disposition, and the extreme courtesy of his manners. But the able statesman mistook his gentle hostess when he hoped to turn her from her course by strong representations, unsupported by convincing arguments. The Duchess felt the interview more keenly than almost any incident that we have ever seen cross her path. But, like the taunt of Methodism in earlier years, it only tended to root her more deeply in her own convic-

* Errol. Disr. Mss. xi. p. 17.

† Assembly Proceedings, 1844, p. 153.

tions, and to make her advance more boldly in the way she had chosen." *

There is a form of trial with which it is difficult to deal —those family divisions, so delicate in themselves, and so painful in their results, which men sought naturally to bury out of sight. From the Mss. we select two cases, in illustration of what was only too common in the land. They occurred in parts of the country far apart from each other; and we not only suppress all reference to names and places, but we shall avoid even the language in which they are recorded.

At a distance from Edinburgh there lived a proprietor, in whose family there was a favourite daughter. Immediately before the Disruption, she had been awakened and brought to the saving knowledge of Christ, under a series of sermons which accidentally, as men would say, she had the opportunity of hearing in an unexpected way. As the minister whose words had reached her heart was one of those who afterwards formed the Free Church, she was naturally led to examine the questions then in debate. After a course of reading and prayerful consideration, she adopted the principles of the Free Church, and resolved to become a member. The announcement of her determination called forth a degree of anger which none could have anticipated. At first, she was cast out of her father's home, and had to take refuge elsewhere. When readmitted, it was to be treated very much as an alien by him who had formerly been one of the fondest of fathers. The distance to the parish church, and also to the Free, was great, so that the family and servants had to drive. She was forbid a place in the family carriage, forbid a place in the conveyance used by the servants; and year after year, in the heat of summer and cold of winter, the strange spectacle was seen of the once-loved daughter walking the long miles on foot, while the father, in his carriage, passed her on the road, and even the servants did not dare to interfere in her behalf. It was in vain that his own relatives, holding his own views on Church matters, remonstrated against such treatment. There was every

* Life, p. 273.

reason to believe that he most sincerely thought he was doing God service.

In another widely different district there occurred a yet more painful case. Among the resident landowners was a family who had sent two daughters to be educated in Edinburgh, and on their return, following their conscientious views of duty, they announced their resolution to join the Free Church. This was resisted, and by force they were compelled to attend the Establishment. For a time this went on, but in the case of the younger, the burden lying on her conscience became more than she could bear, and one winter morning she rose in the early dawn, left her home, and went to some relatives, where her sister soon after joined her. Following out their convictions, they became members of the Free Church ; but it was an offence which their mother never forgave. In the course of the following year she took ill. Her daughters begged humbly and earnestly to be allowed to come home and nurse her, but she was inexorable. The painful disease rapidly ran its course, and she died, never having admitted her daughters into her presence.

In contrast to these painful cases there is an incident briefly recorded by Mr. Davidson, of Latheron, Caithness, which deserves to be mentioned. "For one of the proprietors I felt very much. He was a widower, and had an only daughter, about fifteen years of age, and when Sabbath came he wished her to accompany him to church to welcome the new minister. This she begged to be excused from doing, assigning as a reason that she did not think they were a right Church at all, after the unfaithful way in which they had acted. So he had to go alone, and she joined us, as did her elder brother also, when he came to the parish."*

There was still another evidence of hostile feeling which must not be left unnoticed—the attempt to pursue the members of the Free Church even beyond death. "In the winter of 1845," says Mr. Grant, of Ardoch, "we were interdicted from our burying-ground, bought and inclosed with our own money." It seems that the ground being attached to a *quoad sacra* church, an interdict was issued against the right of burial of

* Parker Mss., Paper by Rev. Mr. Davidson, p. 15.

members of the Free Church. It was noticed that immediately after this prohibition the first two who were buried there were the most influential and wealthiest of the party—husband and wife—who had taken out the interdict. *

Those friends of the Establishment in Ardoch who wished to exclude the members of the Free Church from burial did not stand alone in their desire. The following notice of incidents in the parish of Kilmodan (Glendaruel), Argyllshire, will show what sometimes occurred in remote parts of the country, where the power of public opinion could not be brought to bear :—

"In the class of parishes to which mine belonged, it was not till the Disruption was fairly past that the hostility of our opponents reached its full height. Till the event took place, they always laughed to scorn the idea of hundreds of ministers resigning their livings, and even should one here and there, more fanatical than the rest, make the sacrifice, they were just as confident that to maintain a Free Church ministry in places like mine was the wildest of all projects. But when they saw us steadily pursuing our wonted path, not even staggered by

* Disr. Mss. xiii. pp. 6, 9. Coincidences of this kind have been observed in various parts of the country. At Symington, in Ayrshire, the leading heritor "could not bear the idea of a Free Church being established in the parish against his wishes. He therefore used all his influence, and it was not small, to prevent his tenants and others from joining us, and to defeat our purpose in building a new church. But all in vain. The people who had come out, with few exceptions, steadfastly adhered to us, and the church gradually rose towards completion. The Colonel was often heard to say, as the new church rose before his eyes, that he hoped to God he would never hear our bell ring, and he got his wish, for on the very Sabbath on which the church was opened, he was lying a corpse, having died the previous Friday. His health during the latter part of the year had not been good, and it was generally believed in the parish at the time that the vexation and disappointment he experienced in connection with the Disruption had much to do with undermining and injuring it. Be that as it may, it rapidly declined, so that he was lying cold in death on the day our church was opened, and opened, too, by the very man he had interdicted. The Colonel's death made a deep and profound impression in the parish, the people were overawed and solemnised by it, and well do I remember how they used to speak to me of it in private, saying, with bated breath, "It was unco judgment like."—Disr. Mss. xlviii. p. 13.

the blow which they thought was to annihilate us, and our principles striking their roots deeper and wider everywhere, their wrath knew no bounds. A 'reign of terror' was then set up; I speak the words of truth and soberness when I say so." *

Mr. M'Lean goes on to speak of the leading heritor who "took it at once for granted that, in the emergency which had now occurred, the cure of souls, of which, in his view, I was now stripped, was added to his other duties, *jure devoluto*, as the 'civil magistrate' of the place. And he certainly magnified this odd mixture of offices in many remarkable ways. On one of his warlike rounds of weekly visitation, he came suddenly and unexpectedly on a group of eager inquirers, earnestly discussing the question of the day. Fiercely fixing on a young Free Churchman, who was endeavouring to make good his retreat, as the presumed fomenter of these treasonable practices, he thus addressed him: 'How dare you, sir, speak on such subjects in this glen? I must put them down! The charge of this parish is committed to me as an heritor, a gentleman, and a justice of the peace; and if ever I catch you at this work again, I'll split your head down to the shoulders.' And, suiting the action to the word, he grasped and brandished his heavy-handled whip. I cannot, especially in such short space, do any justice to this scene. The language, however, I give literally as employed, and communicated to me at the time by the youth who, now a respectable teacher in one of our provincial academies, is still ready to bear witness to this and other specimens of the 'reign of terror' in the glen.

"Such being the law and practice of the place, as laid down by its highest authority, 'an heritor, a gentleman, and a justice of the peace,' it was only what might be expected if others were led to employ a mode of argument recommended by such eminent example. And so it was. Not long after, a poor lame lad, a servant of mine, sent by me to superintend the valuation of some furniture which my successor in the manse wished to retain, was, while on that duty, knocked down and trampled on so severely, that he went home, took to his bed, and in a short

* See below, at pp. 393-398.

time died. He told me repeatedly, on his death-bed, that it was for his expressed opinion on the Church question he was assaulted, and that he ascribed his death to the injuries then received. I reported the case to the procurator-fiscal of the district, who came and took a kind of precognition, with which I had every reason to be dissatisfied, neither my presence nor evidence being invited at all! . . .

"One instance more, and I have done. As the drift of what was done was to make the people believe that no spiritual ordinances or privileges were to be had at the hands of Disruption ministers, so, with the same view, the monstrous threat was held out that, the churchyard being heritors' property, they had the power, and would exercise it, of excluding from burial there all who seceded from the Established Church. An elder of mine, venerable for his years and gray hairs, singularly amiable and inoffensive in his manners, and highly respected for his guilelessness and worth, was one day musing over the graves of his children, some of whom had grown to manhood, giving fair promise of being the staff of his old age. Suddenly, in the midst of these sad and sacred meditations, the gentleman to whom I have so often alluded came upon him, and had the heart to say, 'Unless you leave that Free Church, I'll take good care that your old bones shall never lie beside those below.' The words are taken down from the old man's lips, literally translated, for he spoke in Gaelic. It was when standing on the very spot that he himself told me the touching story; and on my remarking that surely the savage threat was not made in earnest, 'But indeed it was, though, and in rage too,' said the gentle old man; and as he spoke through the quivering smile with which he tried, but failed, to veil the agony in his features, I saw 'the iron enter into his soul.'

"Such are a few of the leading facts in my experience of Disruption times. They are not only truthful, but capable of being substantiated still. They may give some idea of the relentless and unceasing process, applied for years, to waste and wear out our people and our principles. Only a small part, however, has been told; and even in the case of some whose hearts and consciences were with us, but who shrank from the

threatened ordeal of 'forsaking all things,' I have witnessed tears of anguish and entreaties to accept a contribution, 'to add their stone to the building of our church,' of which, though at the distance of ten years, I could not speak more particularly, lest the same vindictive spirit of persecution should be guided even yet [1853] to its prey.

"The worst is now over. We may say 'Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit.' By the good hand of God upon us, that brighter future has already come. . . .

"And even apart from the joyful contrast, not all unpleasant in themselves were those troublous times. In them the Word of the Lord was precious, men's hearts were stirred to their depths, God's quickening Spirit was sent forth, and there were times of refreshing from on high. Thus 'He giveth songs in the night.'" *

* Disr. Mss. lxii. pp. 9-14.

XXIX. Hard Work.

It was a happy circumstance that among the outgoing ministers so many were in the vigour of youth, and ready to devote the first and best of their strength to the cause of Christ. It is difficult to give an idea of the toil that was required. Ministers and preachers had gone out, more than 600 strong; but the people seemed at once to recognise the Free Church as the true old Church of Scotland, and the call for the supply of ordinances at her hands rapidly assumed national proportions. A committee was appointed to make arrangements, but the difficulties were great. "The problem," as Dr. Candlish stated in giving in the first report, "was to meet the large and still increasing demand with a greatly inadequate supply; and this explains much of the embarrassment which the Committee has experienced in carrying out the object for which it was appointed. We were working out the insoluble problem of how one loaf of bread was to do the work of two, or how a hundred ministers and probationers were to do the work of two hundred. This was the problem we had to solve; and in the struggle to work it we had to give and take—to withdraw a man here, and send him there, so that, if possible, something approaching to a competent provision might be made for the wants of the adhering population." *

What aggravated the difficulty was the unequal distribution of the ministers who went out. There was one Presbytery—that of Tongue, in Sutherlandshire—in which not a single parish minister remained in the Establishment. There were other Presbyteries—one, for example, in the Synod of Aberdeen—where not a single minister came out. More frequently,

* Assembly Proceedings, Glasgow, 1843, p. 167.

two or three men found themselves burdened with the charge of the parishes of a whole Presbytery or county. Even where the number was greatest, the people who had followed them out naturally claimed a right to their services. The supply of preachers, on the other hand, was utterly inadequate to the demand. In the Synod of Moray there were twelve new congregations demanding supply, but only seven preachers could be sent. In that of Aberdeen there were forty additional congregations, but there were only twenty-five preachers to keep up the services; and in other districts there was a similar deficiency. And what, then, was to be done? Men could not sit still; the fields were white to the harvest. Here was one reward, which had been longed for amid the battling of the Ten Years' Conflict. A great door and effectual was opened up. Cost what it might, the golden opportunity must not fail to be turned to account; and ministers threw themselves into the work, little caring how it might affect life or health. The result was, that the struggle to supply ordinances under such difficulties entailed an amount of exertion which, though little thought of at the moment, sent many a man off the field with shattered health, and consigned others to an untimely grave.

To show the eagerness with which Gospel preaching was welcomed, we may refer to the West of Argyllshire, one of the districts scantily supplied by the Free Church. It was visited by Dr. Begg, who says: "We crossed from Tobermory to the district of Ardnamurchan at a point called Laga. . . . It was mid-day, but the people had nevertheless assembled to hear sermon, some of them having walked fifteen miles. I there saw, for the first time, what I had often read of before—a light burning on the hill as we advanced to the place, and, on inquiry, was told that it was to intimate to the people on the opposite side that there was to be sermon; and I saw the boats coming from the opposite shore with people to attend the service. Here was the fiery cross, that used to bring out the Celts to war, now used to bring them out to hear the Gospel of peace. Mr. Stewart, of Cromar, whom we left behind, as we were forced to press on towards Strontian, began the services of the

day; and we heard the solemn sound of the psalmody die away in the distant hills.

"We went to Strontian, where public worship was to take place, and as no previous intimation had been given, it was necessary that means should be taken for summoning the people. As we sailed along the shore, I was much struck with the primitive way in which the intimation was made. A catechist was seated in the boat, and as she brushed along the shore, he cried out in Gaelic, 'Sermon at six o'clock.' This flew from hamlet to hamlet, and a large audience, when the worship commenced, was assembled on the hill. I could not, of course, understand the Gaelic sermon preached by Mr. Maclean, of Tobermory; but one thing I could not fail to observe, that the Spirit of the living God seemed to accompany the Word with Divine power. Not only did the people hang on the lips of the speaker, but they exhibited the deepest emotion. The audience was dissolved in tears, and deep sobs were heard throughout. It was a calm and lovely evening, . . . and I cannot tell how I felt when I stood in that neighbourhood where the Spirit of God seemed to be at work. . . . I shortly spoke to the people, and a venerable patriarch afterwards came forward, and made an address to me in his native tongue, shedding tears as he spoke. That address was interpreted, and the meaning of it was, that he blessed God that he had lived to see the day when the Church of Scotland was taking so deep an interest in her scattered children, and sending men to witness the trials to which they were subjected, with a prayer that all blessings might descend upon the Church and upon us."*

Another who went for a time to labour in the same county—Mr. Campbell, of Berriedale, in Caithness—states his experience: "During the winter and spring of 1843, the work was very heavy, for the excitement caused by the Disruption—the hunger and thirst of the people for hearing the Word—was very great. They were not satisfied with hearing on the Sabbath; we required to preach to them on week-days also, not only in the open air during the day, but at night also in private houses. In the Island of Islay I preached forty times in two weeks. Their

* *Free Church Magazine*, ii. p. 340.

earnestness was the same everywhere, and the opportunity of preaching the Word was remarkable during the whole of that year." *

This state of mind was by no means confined to the Highlands. At Glasgow, Dr. Lorimer states: "On looking back, I often feel that I could not go through the same service again. I am disposed to wonder how I succeeded, and by this very feeling am reminded that it was not in my own strength—that a gracious Sustainer was standing unseen behind." †

Of Mr. Buchan, of Hamilton, it is stated: "At the memorable Disruption he left the Established Church, carrying along with him a large and influential congregation. Nearly another generation has risen up since then, and it is now little known what prodigious efforts he put forth in organising the Free Church within the bounds of his Presbytery. From all sides requests were made to him, and deputations waited on him, that he should take the charge of the congregation in their new and unwonted circumstances—people, elders, precentor, beadle, having seceded, and the sacramental season being near—that he should come and preside on the occasion, and take the superintendence of their affairs. To such appeals he could not lend a deaf ear, . . . and many of the most flourishing congregations within the bounds regard him as their father." ‡

Mr. Martin, of Bathgate, is said, at the time of the Disruption, and for several years after it, to have had "a very great amount of labour and anxiety thrown upon him. As clerk to the Presbytery, he had to direct, in a great measure, all the business arrangements connected with the congregations in the district." "Linlithgow, Broxburn, Bo'ness, &c., were all witness to his self-denying exertions in their behalf." As if this were not enough, in the summer of 1844 he undertook deputation-work within the bounds of the Presbyteries of Stranraer and Wigtown. "I left home," he says, "on Thursday, the 16th, reached Stranraer about eight the same evening. . . . In thirteen days I delivered twenty-one addresses or sermons, most of them pretty long; was altogether seventeen days away—

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Caithness. † Disr. Mss. i. p. 10.

‡ *Monthly Record of Free Church*, 1869, p. 185.

travelled very considerably above 400 miles, and at an expense under £3, 3s. I was very jaded when I returned." "It was commonly said of him at that time, 'Mr. Martin is killing himself; he is doing the work of three men.'" * He died at Bathgate, on the 15th of May, 1850, at the age of 48 years.

Even those ministers who were far advanced in life seemed to shake off the burden of years. Dr. Landsborough "had charge of Kilwinning, Stevenston, Saltcoats, and Ardrossan. Every Sabbath he preached three times, and on several occasions he even preached four times. On one occasion, in addition to preaching four times on a Sabbath, he had a short service in a private house, where he baptised a child, whose father was at sea. . . . Dr. Landsborough, although near the close of his sixty-fourth year, showed a strength and endurance —a freedom and power—far exceeding that of any former period of his life. Weary he might be *in* his work, but never weary *of* it. The congregations also were wonderfully large, and the ears of the people were open to hear. . . . They listened as—with the exception of the time of revival—they never had done before." †

In the same way at Ruthwell, "Dr. Duncan felt glad that he was now at liberty to carry the message of peace over borders which had long been to him painfully impassable. Though in his seventieth year, he went every alternate Sabbath evening along the shores of the Solway during summer to preach in the open air to about 200 people in Caerlaverock parish. In Mousewald and Dalton also he had preaching stations, and in each of these parishes we got Sabbath schools placed." "Sure I am that his energy was never greater; his youth seemed to be renewed—his labours were more abundant—and when he returned late and cold from distant prayer-meetings during that severe winter (1844-45) in the little open gig, he would not allow us to express any concern as if he were exerting himself beyond his strength." ‡

There are some of the narratives, however, which deserve

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Linlithgow. See also Memoir, pp 118, 125.

† Memoir of Dr. Landsborough, p. 184.

‡ Disr. Mss. xvi. pp. 8, 9.

to be given at greater length. The first is by Mr. M'Leod, of Maryborough, afterwards of Lochbroom.

"Of the increase of labour brought on by the Disruption, in supplying the adhering population in those parishes and districts where the ministers remained in the Establishment, Mr. M'Leod had a large share. During the following months of this summer, and the harvest season of 1843, besides having the charge of two congregations in his own Presbytery, he frequently responded to the almost daily calls from other parts of the country for assistance at the administration of the Lord's Supper; for help and encouragement to the adherents of the Church, specially where the cause was much opposed.

"With other places, he visited Lochaber, and assisted at the memorable communion at Kilmalie, when the congregation worshipped on the sea-shore below flood-mark, under circumstances which, with other incidents of the times, no doubt will be detailed by the much-respected Free Church minister of that congregation.

"After the solemn occasion in this parish was over, and spending some days lecturing in that wide and wild country, where attempts were made in some localities to prevent the adherents of the Free Church meeting at all, even in the open air, he visited, by special appointment of the Home Mission Committee, Badenoch and Strathspey for the first time, and followed up arrangements made by the late Mr. Shepherd, of Kingussie, who was the only minister along the line of the [Upper] Spey who had left the Establishment.

"By holding meetings in eight of the parishes of that extensive country, where the people, till then, had continued to give such careless attendance as they were in the habit of giving at the parish church, a very general interest was awakened in the cause and principles of the Free Church. One meeting at least was held in one or other of these parishes daily; and the only Sabbath he had at this time in the country, he met the people on the well-known knowe of Tullochgorum, a central point, where, it was stated in the local papers of the time, upwards of 4000 assembled. . . .

"After being some days with the congregations under his

charge, and meeting several urgent engagements, he was asked to visit Lochbroom, on the west coast. On the 29th of September, he crossed the Dithreabh Mòr, for the first time, on a very dark night of heavy rain, when, under Providence, he owed much of his safety to the sagacity of an old Highland pony, which had been sent to meet him, and was so well acquainted with the hills, burns, and rivers. When his guide and himself failed to make out the path, this sure-footed animal kept its way till after crossing the river Broom, which was greatly flooded, it arrived at the old manse of Lochbroom, where the widow of the late Dr. Ross was still residing. . . .

"Mr. M'Leod preached at Ullapool on the first Sabbath of October, in the open air, and also on Monday, and lectured on the Church question. The extent and physical difficulties of the parish seemed not to interfere with the attendance, for the whole adult population, with few exceptions, indeed, attended—from two to three thousand people. Although it was thought that Monday should have ended the service here, he was obliged to officiate on Tuesday and Wednesday, the people from the distant districts remaining without a break.

"During the days of this sojourn, it was very manifest that the impressions were very favourable, both as regarded the spiritual interests of the people, and their views of the principles and position of the Free Church. The weeping aloud of several, the abundant tears of many more, the solemn and fixed attention of all, clearly indicated the depth of their feelings."

Mr. M'Leod closes his notes of these and other similar journeys with the significant statement: "In his labours in the West Highlands alone, during the last twenty-one years, he has travelled upwards of 9000 miles in open boats." *

And what the hardships of these journeys often were may be learned from the narrative of his friend, Mr. Sinclair, of Plockton: "The work to be done was almost gigantic. Only a man of Mr. M'Leod's well-knit, stalwart frame, and vigorous, elastic constitution, could have stood for any time the labours he went through, and which many friends in the south would consider incredible. For instance, we have known Mr. M'Leod, in

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Lochcarron, paper by Mr. M'Leod.

returning home after preaching at one of the more remote stations of his charge, forced by stress of weather to pass the night on a bare, insular, uninhabited rock of the sea, on a rainy October night, with little food, without fire, no better shelter than the 'oilskins' of his crew, and no better mattress than their jackets, which the brave, loving fellows could ill afford to want. We have accompanied him in his good boat on a Sabbath morning in the month of June, from his manse in Ullapool to one of his distant stations. The wind turned contrary, and it was 4 o'clock P.M., instead of 12 noon, when we arrived at the appointed place; the 'dear people,' as he himself invariably called them, patiently waiting our arrival, and as patiently waiting for two hours after that in the open air, till the services of the day were over. It was 10 o'clock at night ere we got back to Ullapool." *

Not less remarkable is the statement by the Rev. Eric Findlater, of Lochearnhead:—

"As to my own personal privations, as it does not become me, so I am unwilling, to speak of them. I had youth and good health on my side, and, I trust, the approbation of a good conscience in the part I took. Suffice it to say, that during the year of the Disruption I was seldom three nights running, in the same bed; and I recollect of having made a calculation at this time of having travelled in my gig or on horseback about 1800 miles in about eighteen months; but you, who know how wide the districts were in which I had to officiate, will not be surprised at this. My chief regret in those days was, that I could not carry on anything like systematic study. When I now look back upon the variety of places in which I officiated, it looks more like romance than reality. Again and again on the bare hillside, in that winter of 1843-44, the Sabbath-days of which were unprecedentedly fine; often under the precarious shelter of a canvas tent; on one occasion at Durness it was rent from top to bottom by a squall in the middle of the service; at times in the shelter of a stone dyke; sometimes from a wooden tent or box; at other times in a cottage, having a fire in the centre and the people grouped round it; at other times

* *Free Church Monthly Record*, August, 1871.

in a gravel-pit. On one occasion in a cave in the island of Raasay, on another on a hill-top, again in a large barn, and once on board one of Her Majesty's cruisers, with the Bible placed on the flag of Old England. But always in those years it was to large and attentive audiences.

"Some odd circumstances occurred. I remember my horse, in his love for the clover of the glebe at Durness, where he was bred, gave me the slip in Assynt, and travelled a distance of thirty miles before he was overtaken. I had to spend a whole winter evening in the same room in a public-house with an Established Church probationer; and I suppose both of us would have preferred any other society. I had to exchange civilities with factors who would avoid me as they would the plague, because they knew I was often engaged in drawing out petitions to the Duke for sites. I had to perform ordinances while wet to the skin, after riding perhaps fourteen miles, and having no possibility of changing my clothes. And I remember on two occasions how the same idea crossed me. One of these was on a cold night, in the house of a Gaelic schoolmaster; the curtains were but thin, and the window but poorly supplied with glass. The other was while eating oatcake and milk out of an iron spoon in a smith's house in Mull, after preaching two sermons. There was a slate hung up on the wall with the honest man's accounts jotted on it, and, among other items, one struck my fancy—viz., 'To putting a ring in ——'s pig's snout.' I could not choose but think on both these occasions on the luxurious tables I had but a year previously been a guest at—the rich hangings, the gildings, plate, and company. Yet I believe I can say, without ostentation, that my sleep was as sound, and my enjoyment of my plain fare as great, on these occasions, as when reposing on down, or associating with nobility; and that I did not grudge the sacrifice." *

But while youth and strength were able to withstand such pressure, there were numerous cases in which health suffered, and life itself was endangered. Dr. M'Gilvray, of Aberdeen, then of Glasgow, writes:—"During the last year of the struggle, and the first of the Disruption, he visited the

* Disr. Mss. lvi.

counties of Argyll, Wigtown, and Perth, for the purpose of explaining the principles [of the Free Church], and was the means of securing the adhesion of great numbers to the cause. To some of the remotest of these places, such as Islay, Arran, and Kintyre, he travelled in the dead of winter, holding meetings every day at different points, exposed to all the hardships and discomforts peculiar to these bleak and stormy districts. Owing to the opposition of lairds and factors, the meetings were mostly held in the open air, sometimes on the public highway, and sometimes on the bare sea-beach; and more than once he had to address them with wet clothes drying on his back, and his feet sunk to the ankles in snow. . . .

"His congregation was one of the few which suffered no loss by the Disruption. . . . But the case was different with himself. In consequence of the heavy labours and self-denying sacrifices connected with the Disruption year, along with personal and family afflictions of no ordinary kind, his health became seriously impaired, and he was at last seized with an attack of fever, which proved nearly fatal. As he was slowly recovering from the state of prostration to which he was reduced at this period, he was asked by the Colonial Committee to go out as a deputy to Canada for six months; and hoping that the sea-voyage and change of climate might have some effect in restoring his exhausted energies, he accepted the appointment, and set out on his colonial mission in September, 1846."*

So, also, it is said of Mr. Nairn, of Forgan, Fifeshire, that when the Disruption came he saw the path of duty clearly, and took it without hesitation. But the bodily fatigue and mental anxiety that he underwent at that period, in forming and fostering Free Church congregations in the parishes adjoining his own, so injured his health that he was obliged to resign his charge.†

Thus health and strength gave way, and in some instances life was sacrificed; but with all this there is usually little desire to dwell on these stories of toil, and exposure, and death. What can be more simple than an entry such as

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Glasgow.

† *Free Church Record*, August, 1873, p. 169.

this?—"Mr. Gordon, of Edderton, had to remove with his family to Tain, a distance of five miles, as no dwelling could be got in the parish. In 1846 his last illness was incurred by over-fatigue and exposure on *his third preaching tour that year* in the remote Highlands. He returned home on the 20th November, became ill on the 25th, and lingered on till August." *

In terms similarly brief we are told that in the Presbytery of Stranraer five ministers, with a preacher (sometimes two), had to supply ten congregations. These duties "caused much exhaustion to all the ministers. To this may be ascribed the acceleration of the death of Mr. Lamb." †

Much has been said, even by adversaries—in many cases, perhaps too much—of the money sacrifices of the Free Church, which bulked so largely in public view. If the full history of the toil and struggle of those years could be told, it would be seen that in many a home there were results beside which mere pecuniary loss was of small account. It was happy to work and contend in the cause of Christ; but the above extracts will show at what cost it was often done. "The Disruption was a necessity of conscience which the providence of the Church's Head had made inevitable, and out of which He has in various ways brought unthought-of good. . . . Yet the excitement and labours, as well as the anxieties and hardships, consequent on the great change of circumstances, brought premature age on many of the most devoted ministers, cutting some of them off in the prime of life, and forcing others to remove from loved and loving flocks to lighter spheres of work." ‡ Something, in short, of the martyr-spirit was needed to meet the difficulties of that time. Men had not only to spend, but to be spent, for Christ.

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Tain.
† Parker Mss., Presb. of Stranraer.
‡ Memorials of the Rev. C. Macintosh, p. 58.

XXX. Trials of Ministers.

In many a manse the anxieties of the weeks that preceded the Disruption formed by far the severest trial to which ministers were subjected. During previous controversies there had risen up a feeling of chivalrous devotedness to the cause of the Established Church, and nothing could exceed the reluctance with which men contemplated the abandonment of their position. But a still greater difficulty was the fear that only a mere handful of people would stand by them when the final step was taken. It was loudly proclaimed that Government had a healing measure in preparation; and as the decisive moment drew near, there appeared in some quarters ominous signs of a disposition to hang back, as if congregations were shrinking from the burden of ministerial support. In many parishes the prospects of the outgoing ministers were of the gloomiest kind.

"I am, perhaps, more faithless than some of my brethren," says Mr. Martin, of Bathgate; "but I certainly expect much suffering in connection with our future position." *

Mr. Walker, of Dysart, writes: "I remember a son of Mr. Proudfoot, of Culter, telling me that he was walking as a boy with his father, shortly before the Disruption, when they stopped to speak to a man by the roadside. The conversation turned upon what was coming, and young Proudfoot heard his father calmly say that he had no expectation of being able to remain with his congregation (an entirely rural one), and that his thoughts were directed to seeking employment in Canada, or in some office at home. The man remonstrated, and the talk then took the shape of discussing how much it might be possible for the minister and his large young family to live

* Memoir, p. 115.

upon—the issue being, that Mr. Proudfoot thought that he might be able to remain if he could be secure of an income of £80 a-year. Culter is one of the prettiest parishes in the Upper Ward, and the manse is in one of its sweetest nooks. One can imagine, therefore, the greatness of the quiet pressure which was brought to bear upon its minister (himself a man of the Nathanael-Paterson type of mind) when he could calmly contemplate the surrender of so much of what made life attractive for him, and the burying himself during the remainder of his days in a counting-room."

At Yester, Dr. Thomson, now of Paisley, describes the difficulties of his position. "The very paupers—old, helpless women—were threatened with the loss of their weekly allowance if they left the parish church; and a system of terrorism was employed by farmers and others against their workmen and servants. In all this Lord Tweeddale had no share, for he had been absent about a year in Madras as Governor. Still, there were those who wielded territorial influence in a way which, if he had known of it, he would have strongly repudiated and effectively prevented. Then, too many of the people clung to the hope that Parliament would yet pass a measure which might satisfy the Church; and others even expressed the wish that the ministers would remain at their posts.

"This made the prospect very dark, especially as even those who turned out to be the most staunch in their adherence to principle refrained from saying what they would do if the crisis came, and left their ministers in doubt. . . . All this was very depressing and discouraging to us, and our prospect not merely of future support, but of future usefulness, seemed dark.

"As an illustration of our state of feeling, I may mention the following incident. About a month or two before the Disruption, the late Principal Fairbairn, then minister of Salton, four miles distant from Yester, called at my manse. We had a long walk and conversation as to our future prospects. He asked me whether I thought that many of my people would come out. I said that I thought very few would—certainly not above fifty, but that if even fifty came out, I would remain as their minister; if not, I had made up my mind to emigrate

to America. I then asked him if many of the Salton people were likely to come out. He replied that the patron had told the congregation that if he came out they should have the choice of a successor, and the hostile influence was so strong that he did not expect any at all. 'The fact is,' he added, 'they will just say, when they see me leaving the manse, He was a good sort of man, Mr. Fairbairn; it's a pity he gaed awa'.'" *

It was in the face of such prospects that men had to make up their minds. They must walk by faith—there was no alternative. They literally "went out, not knowing whither they went." This was none the less true that the moment the decisive step had been taken the tide at once turned, and popular sympathy rapidly rose and flowed. After that conversation with Professor Fairbairn, Dr. Thomson goes on: "What was our surprise, when the Disruption actually occurred, to find that in his parish, out of a population of 800, he had an adherence of 600, and in my parish of 1050, there were 830 members and adherents of the Free Church. We never expected anything of the kind, and we could only say, The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." †

One thing not easily borne in some cases was the interference of friends who held opposite sentiments, and anxiously sought to prevent ministers from joining the Free Church. "I was exposed," says Mr. Robertson, of Gartly, "to many temptations to remain in the Establishment from the remonstrances of worldly friends and relatives, who insisted that at my advanced years, and having such a numerous family, it would be anything but duty to expose myself to the privations I must endure, and bring my family to ruin. The patron of the parish, too, declined till the eleventh hour to listen to any applications made to him for the living, in the hope that I might be induced to change my mind, and accept a new presentation. I had a communication from a friend in London intimating this to me, and beseeching me, for the sake of my wife and family, to write the Duke of Richmond immediately, or allow him to apply for me, that he might present me anew to the living I had resigned." ‡

* Disr. Mss. lvii. † *Ibid.* ‡ Disr. Mss. xv. p. 4.

So also at Errol, Dr. Grierson states: "The amount of personal attachment manifested to me on all hands was very gratifying, but on the part of many it showed itself rather by the preposterous though combined attempt to induce me to remain in the Establishment, than by anything like a readiness to follow me out of it." *

Mr. Grant, of Ayr, was appealed to in a different way. "After the Disruption took place, the clerk of the Established Presbytery of Ayr wrote me a formal letter, to the effect that the Presbytery had heard that I had signed the Deed of Demission, and joined the Free Church, and intimating that unless I appeared at next meeting of Presbytery my name would be deleted from the roll of ministers. A few days later, the clerk, an old and respected minister of the Moderate school, and a man of very genial and kindly disposition, ran across the street, grasped my hand, and apologised for sending me that letter, on the ground that he was obliged to do so in his official capacity. I assured him that I had understood it so, and had no occasion to be offended. 'But,' said he, 'you will come back, and withdraw your name, and it will be all right again.' I told him I would not do so. I still remember the strange feelings with which I heard the old man urge me to withdraw from my position, saying, 'It is all very well for Drs. Chalmers, Candlish, &c., to hold to their position. They have publicly committed themselves, but you have not.' I looked at the old man with amazement, but seeing the real kindliness of his eye, I could not find it in my heart to utter the words that were in my mouth—Is there, then, no such thing as religious principle?" †

When Dr. Duncan, of Ruthwell, went to attend the Assembly in 1843, he was followed to Edinburgh by a petition which evidently gave him some annoyance. The parishioners thought "that, as he had been presented by a patron, their call on him thus to remain would turn his, at least, into a popular settlement. It was believed to be urged on under the influence of a neighbouring minister, who having turned back himself would have been glad of countenance. . . . The reply was rather

* Disr. Mss. xi. p. 3. † Disr. Mss. xli. pp. 3, 4.

brief, expressing surprise and disappointment that, after all his efforts to enlighten them, they should not see that not only his duty but theirs was to quit the Establishment, which secular legal encroachment had made no longer the Church of our fathers." "It is well meant," he himself says in referring to it, "although very injudicious, and I am sorry to see that there are so many who have so little apprehension of the real merits of the question or of the position which I have conscientiously taken up." *

The pressure of private appeals was still harder to bear. Only let the reader conceive the feelings with which such a letter as this was read in a far-off country manse, coming as it did from one who held a prominent place in the legal and political circles of Edinburgh :—"I now once more, ere it be too late, address you on the painful subject of this, in my humble opinion, most inconsiderate and fatal step which you are about to take, to the ruin of my sister and your children." The writer then goes into an argument, strongly expressed, and, from his own point of view, well put, against Free Church principles :—"You know my opinion of the leaders, . . . and to what extent pious men have been made dupes of. The prospects of the secession with respect to pecuniary matters, I also know, are delusive; and whatever a few of the popular preachers, as they are called, may make of it in towns, you and other quiet country clergymen will be very soon thrown overboard. I therefore implore you to have done with this. I write all this in very sincere sympathy for your wife and children, whom I think you are, without honest cause, deserting and leaving to certain ruin. . . . If my poor father and mother had been alive, you may figure what they would have felt on seeing their daughter, who was always accustomed to ease and competency, thus thrown adrift on the wide world, with a large family and the burden of increasing years. I cannot bear to think of it, or bring my mind to believe it. But I can only conclude by saying that if I thought your course was honourable in pursuing the phantom of independence, I would not ask you to desert it, even with the fatal consequences which must ensue, and the extent of which

* Memoir of Dr. Duncan, p. 300.

it is impossible to foresee." Quietly and calmly, in the face of this, the path of duty was followed; and to the praise of God's goodness it should be told that to the upright there arose light in darkness, and that the blessing which follows the seed of the righteous has not been withheld.

That diminished incomes should lead to many privations was only what men had looked for. In the nature of things it could not otherwise be. They had counted the cost. There now lies before us a pale note, written in pencil in Tanfield Hall on the 18th of May, posted after the Assembly broke up, and carefully treasured for these thirty years by her who received it. "My own beloved and disinherited wife," it begins, "the deed has been done! We are now sitting in the hall of our new Assembly, with feelings of the deepest solemnity, and yet holy joy and unutterable peace;" and so the sentences run on, traced by one who took a prominent part in the discussions of that day. Disinherited, indeed, they felt themselves to be, —except that they had respect to the better inheritance.

It was natural at the same time, that anxious thoughts should rise in the new homes of ministers as the months went on, and it became a question where the support of wife and children was to be obtained. From Blairgowrie we have the following reference to the Glasgow Assembly:—"We had been led to expect that by that time the ministers would have some idea of what their income from the Sustentation Fund might be; therefore, there was some little disappointment felt by those at home when, in the letters received from Mr. Macdonald, there were constant references to some scheme which he was planning for the building of schools, and providing for our outed teachers, but not a single word as to the provision to be made for the ministers' wives and children. Just at this time a lady called—one of those kindly disposed friends who had remained in the Establishment. After talking about indifferent matters, she said, 'Really, Mrs. Macdonald, your husband did very wrong in leaving the Church. He should have given it up. It is all very well to talk of making sacrifices, but when a man has a wife and family to provide for it will not do. You cannot keep a house, and servant, and child

on nothing, and we hear that all you are to have is £40 a-year.' Mrs. M.'s heart almost failed her as she saw in prospect the hard struggle that awaited them; but, concealing her feelings, she replied: 'Well, my husband took the step in faith at the call of duty, and although it were again in his choice, he would just act as he has done. We are trusting in God for our supplies, and He that sent the ravens to feed Elijah can equally provide for us. We did it in faith, and will, without doubt, be cared for.' There was not much agreement with these views, and soon after the lady left; and no time was allowed to pass till a letter was wending its way to Glasgow, saying: 'You are always speaking about some scheme for raising money for schools, but you have never yet told us what is to be the dividend, and Mrs. —— has been telling us that we are only to have £40 a-year. Be sure and write, for we cannot think how we shall manage on that.' Next post brought the reply: 'Let my good wife take courage. We are to have £40, not for the whole, but for the half-year; and He that hath provided this will give all else that is needed." *

That the ministers of country charges were the greatest sufferers was obvious on all hands, and yet few things are more remarkable than the generous and chivalrous spirit in which those who had wealthy town congregations willingly took their share in the privations of their brethren. At St. George's, Edinburgh, during the ministry of Dr. Candlish, the money raised for Church purposes reached, on an average, upwards of £7000 a-year. In 1843 the Deacons' Court resolved to make the annual income of their minister £400—their opinion being, that for a man placed as Dr. Candlish was, with many demands on his hospitality and otherwise, a stipend of £400 a-year was a very moderate and reasonable one. This Dr. Candlish declined, telling them that until time revealed what was in store for his brethren in the ministry throughout the Church, he would accept only £300 a-year, without a house, as minister of St. George's.†

At Greenock, the stipend of Dr. M'Farlan was £780—said to be the largest at that time in the Established Church.

* Disr. Mss. lv. p. 12.

† History of St. George's, by D. Maclagan, Esq., pp. 95, 96.

It had been cheerfully resigned, and after the Disruption, his income—without a house—averaged £317; involving an annual sacrifice of £463.

In Glasgow, the incomes of the ministers had all along been barely adequate, and after the Disruption, therefore, the change was the more felt. Dr. Lorimer states that in his case "his stipend was much short of what it used to be—hitherto [1846] the diminution has been from £150 to £160 a-year."*

If it was thus in towns, there were greater privations which had to be submitted to in the country. At Errol, Dr. Grierson says: "In reference to temporal emoluments, I have to observe that the amount now is not one-half of what it was formerly."†

Of Mr. Dickie, of Dunlop, it is stated that "at the Disruption he saw no prospect before him but to quit the scene of his ministry altogether, from the scantiness of the population. Yet never for one moment did he hesitate. No one cast in his lot more cheerfully, and few surrendered more than he—for taking the difference of his former and after stipend, he sacrificed not less than £150 a-year for the cause; and if the sum be reckoned up for the twenty years that have followed, it gives £3000 as the contribution of one man. Yet no one ever heard him complain, and never did one feeling of regret take possession of his mind."‡

How such a change of circumstances affected ministers and their families may be shown by a few examples. In the Establishment, Dr. Landsborough's stipend had averaged above £350, including manse and glebe—being higher than three-fourths of the parishes in Ayrshire. "The first year after the Disruption it was £105 without a house, and for several years it did not average more than £120, though still he had no manse. Previously he had derived about £100 from private means, which of late had been gradually reduced to little more than half. . . . For long he had made it a rule to give away £50 yearly—thus dedicating to the Lord an eighth part of his income. Now he gave in the same proportion as before, though he could not give to the same amount." . . . "One of the two

* Disr. Mss. i. p. 5. † Disr. Mss. xi. p. 13.

‡ *Record of Free Church*, November, 1863, p. 319.

valued domestics, who had been long in his service, must be parted with. *The pony and cow must be sold!"* *

Dr. Duncan, of Ruthwell, had been accustomed to a phaeton for himself and family. He at once gave it up, and, at seventy years of age, prepared to do the work of his parish on foot. The gift of a low gig, exempt from taxation, presented to him by his brother, in part relieved him. †

That the privations which such straitened circumstances involved must often have been severely felt is obvious, and there is no pretence of indifference to such trials on the part of ministers. One thing was especially painful—the impossibility of obtaining for the children of the manse the education which their parents would fain have given them. Of these things little is said in most of the Mss., but Mr. Robertson, of Gartly, expresses what many others must have experienced: "My altered circumstances prevent me from educating my children as I would wish, and deprive me in my old age of many comforts which I enjoyed when a younger man, and expose my family to privations which, I trust in the Lord's sovereign hand, will prove blessings in disguise. . . . By the Lord's goodness, my state of health since the Disruption has been, upon the whole, better than for many years before, though for some months past [1846], owing to my labouring somewhat above my strength during the summer and autumn months, my want of means for keeping a horse, and other causes, I have felt my strength much exhausted." ‡

Apart, however, from pecuniary loss, there were other circumstances which were hard to bear. Sometimes the trial came in the form of contemptuous treatment, in quarters where ministers had been accustomed to receive consideration and respect. "I was exposed to many indignities," Mr. Dodds, of Humbie, states, "from many quarters." The particulars he refrains from giving, but Dr. Grierson, of Errol, one of those ministers whose years and standing entitled him to the highest regard, goes more into detail. "I am sensible that I have incurred the loss of a considerable share of social respect and influence,

* Memoir, pp. 186, 181. † Disr. Mss. xvi. p. 6.
‡ Disr. Mss. xvii. pp. 5, 6.

especially among the wealthiest classes in the community. . . . In one instance I have been explicitly and absolutely refused admittance under the roof of one of the principal families, whom I have frequently visited in affliction, although my known and acknowledged object was to meet with one or two of the servants who belonged to my congregation, and to whom it was my duty to pay a ministerial visit." *

Sometimes the gentlest natures were subjected to the rudest treatment. No minister in the Church was more conspicuous than Dr. Landsborough for the inoffensiveness and meekness of the Christian character. Yet he must take his share of the indignities which at that time were common. "He was one day seen scanning the houses in Saltcoats more carefully than usual. A well-known gentleman accosts. 'Mr. L., you seem to be looking about you more than is your wont.' 'Yes,' was the reply; 'I am looking for a house for myself and family.' 'Oh, in that case,' said he, 'I know one that will exactly suit you.' 'Where is it?' asked Mr. L. 'Bedlam,' was the insulting answer, as the gentleman moved off." †

Such expressions of hostile feeling were not always confined to words. At Aberdour, on the coast of Fife, they took tangible shape. "The congregation had to worship for a time in the open air, near the sea-side. They had difficulty in obtaining a site, in consequence of the opposition of the Earl of Moray's commissioner, Mr. Ainslie, who prevailed with two proprietors not to grant ground, and bought a third piece to hinder the Free Church from getting it. Subsequently, after the church was built, and a manse for the minister was nearly completed, the same Mr. Ainslie caused a dead wall to be built of stone and lime close up to the manse, and as high as the top of the highest windows, thus darkening the house—the windows being chiefly on that side for the sake of the view—and rendering it uninhabitable till windows were opened on the other side. This wall, which obtained the *soubriquet* of 'Claverhouse Tower,' was removed by Mr. Ainslie's successor. A lithograph of it was taken, and it gave occasion to '*ane ballant.*'" ‡

* Disr. Mss. xi. pp. 13, 14. † Memoir, p. 182.

‡ Parker Mss., Presb. of Dunfermline.

But, leaving these details, let us take the experience of Mr. M'Lean at Kilmodan (Glendaruel), Argyllshire (subsequently of Callander), as showing the contrast between a minister's position *before* and *after* the Disruption.

"When that now memorable event, the Disruption, began to cast its shadow before it, I was the happy pastor of a peaceful Highland parish. The population did not exceed a hundred families, sweetly located along the sides of a valley—all, with a single exception, firmly attached to the Church of their fathers, and all so easy of access that a few days of active visitation could overtake the whole. Grouped prominently together, in this pleasant field of ministerial labour, are seen the manse with its garden, and the Church with its grave-yard. On every side, hills rise abruptly to a considerable height; while above, the blue vault seems to rest all round on their summits, and to roof in the whole scene. 'Faultless is the glen, but for the difficulty of getting in and out,' says an old Gaelic proverb of the place; and though the perfect roads and bridges of modern times have removed the implied complaint of the rough passes, and even changed them into the chief beauties of the district, the old proverb graphically pictures the ruling feature still—peculiarly isolated and lovely seclusion. A slow stream, well-known to the lovers of 'old Isaak's' craft, winds in silvery links along the plain; at first through fragrant meadows and fertile fields, then, seeking through a narrow outlet the shade of rich woodland, it wanders, 'at its own sweet will,' round fairy knolls clothed with lovely copse, or by giant crags crested with sombre pines, till at last it issues into light only to lose itself for ever in a little arm of the sea—one of those exquisite recesses between woods and streams and heathery precipices, which add such a charm to our western shores. Across the entrance to this lake, and securing a calm within, stretches a noble breakwater of rocky islets, one of which, the innermost, crowned with the ruins of a castle, possesses not only, like the rest, the charm of picturesque beauty, but the romantic interest of old historic association. It was alongside of it that, trusting to the intricacy of the rocky labyrinth which the king's frigates would have to thread before they could reach him, the

noble patriot Argyle moored his little squadron, in that unfortunately premature expedition, which, had it been as successful as it was disastrous, would have spared our country the worst of our 'killing time,' saved from a bloody death many of her noblest and best, and anticipated by some years the blessings of the glorious Revolution.

"Such were the external attractions of this quiet retreat, while, not less peaceful, and still more endearing, were the relations between pastor and people, from the highest to the humblest. And in these circumstances, so pleasing to my tastes, suited to my capacity, and satisfactory to my ambition, with a numerous family besides, all of us literally dependent on the benefice as our sole means of support, to imperil all, hastily or on light grounds (as we are sometimes accused of having done), to sacrifice it from any motive short of the inexorable constraint of conscience, would have been a folly, a sin, and a shame.

"Such a constraint did, in the sovereign providence of God, unmistakably come. And if in ordinary circumstances and peaceful times my position was so eminently desirable, as I have described it, it was certainly about the very last one would have chosen for the conflict in which we were now to engage. In a parish leavened with 'Moderatism' from time immemorial, not a village, not a feu even, within its bounds, and the whole resident influence decidedly hostile—such was the field on which we stood forth at the stern call of duty, set up the banner God had given us, and displayed it, 'because of the truth.'

"In these circumstances, I spared no pains from the first in publicly plying the people with week-day lectures on the great question at issue; but I could never bring myself to deal privately and personally with them, never asking even my elders what part they purposed to take in the approaching Disruption. . . . And so it was, that even so late in the day as the 'Convocation,' I did not know, on going to that meeting, of a single individual prepared to take the step to which I then pledged myself. The lowest ebb, however, was the turning point of the tide; and it flowed from that time forward. It

was known what I had done, and it was not doubted that I would redeem my pledge. On my return home, a written assurance was sent me from *all* my elders—six in number, and none of them appointed during my incumbency—that, come what might, the session would remain unbroken. The great mass of the people, too, adhered, their understandings and their hearts owning the identity of the principles expounded to them with those embodied in our Standards, and inseparably interwoven with the eventful history of our Church. All now gave good promise that, under God's blessing, these principles had taken deep root in the land."

Referring to the severe treatment to which he and his people were exposed, Mr. M'Lean supposes that a question may arise, whether it was "not provoked on our part by indiscretion or violence. Such is always the persecutor's apology. But it was not so. For the people, I can testify there are none more peaceably disposed anywhere, or more deferential to their superiors in all things lawful. And for myself, I will call a witness whose testimony here is conclusive. The gentleman, whom I may call the author and manager of the persecution in the Glen, the proprietor of more than one-half of the parish, called on me on the eve of the Disruption, and asked me, seemingly much affected, if there was no alternative, but that I must 'go out.' Nothing, he said, had ever so grieved him as the thought that such might be the case. He was on all sides congratulated on its being a model parish, educationally, as well as otherwise, under my auspices, and he had hoped for himself and his children long to enjoy the blessing of my ministry. He was pleased to say so, and much more which I will not repeat. But, finding that he had failed in the main object of his visit, he forgot all this; and from that day forth he exerted himself to the very utmost when we became houseless to keep us so, and have us exterminated altogether as a nuisance from the district. Even on his own showing, however, he could 'find no occasion against us, except concerning the law of our God.' . . .

"I pass on to the period of the Disruption in which I had the honour of bearing my humble part as a member of Assembly.

So confident was I of that event being inevitable, that, notwithstanding all the arts of those 'lying in wait to deceive,' I had, before leaving home, sold off all the stock and implements of a valuable glebe; and now, on my return, with those things out of the way, we at once set about packing furniture and preparing for instant removal. We had just finished our heavy task by Saturday evening. On Sabbath the church was to be preached vacant, while I was to address my flock on the green in front of the manse. On Monday morning we were to bid a final farewell to the sweet spot, and proceed to a temporary home, mercifully opened to us in a neighbouring parish, when unexpectedly (at this hour) a deputation of the heritors was announced. They found me pondering all these things in a dismantled apartment, and amid the heart-sickening desolations of an uprooted home. Without one softening word of sympathy, to their object they went hard and straight. And it was this—that either I should not preach at all on the morrow, or go away somewhere out of sight and hearing, lest I should disturb the feelings of the reverend gentleman who was to preach in the church and declare it vacant! This modest request, though little careful of my feelings, was certainly most considerately tender towards his. He had inducted me to the charge, introduced me to the congregation, held our principles all along till he must needs suffer for them, solemnly pledged himself to them at the Assembly of 1842, and at the Convocation of the same year; and now, having deserted the cause, he was the man whom its enemies delighted to honour in dealing the *coup de grace* to an old friend!

"Many a solemn and touching scene did those trying times make us acquainted with. I am not sure, however, but that the Sabbath meeting on the green was the most trying of all in my experience. Not only did most trying circumstances, inseparable from such a meeting, concur to impart to it a deep and painful interest, but special care was taken to produce the impression among the people that, if I ventured to preach, measures were all ready and constables at hand for my forcible removal. More than this, a most friendly note from a non-resident heritor was handed to me at the eleventh hour, advis-

ing me, for my own sake, to yield the point, as he understood they were fully resolved to proceed to extremities. Reluctantly declining the kind counsel, however, and entirely disregarding the threats, I felt it to be my duty to take my stand there; and there, accordingly, in the presence of my persecutors, who kept walking round about us, speaking loudly within earshot, and with significant looks, I conducted public worship, with such emotions as I may never feel again; while my poor flock, apprehensive every moment of what might happen, sat closer and closer together, like a fluttered covey when the hawk sails overhead. Further than this, however, we were not disturbed on this occasion, an interdict not having been obtained—just as I had calculated upon—till the vacancy was declared.

"I shall not dwell on our 'quitting the manse.' Monday came, with all the dreary accompaniments of such a 'flitting' as ours. Nearly twenty carts mustered on that morning—not all actually needed, perhaps, but not the less tokens of their owners' sympathy and respect. In silence and with subdued air, like men on solemn and affecting duty, each took his allotted share of the *disjecta membra* of our home, and formed into line. Our six children, the oldest just eight, wondering what the doing of the day might mean, took their places in the rear; and all things being now ready, we quenched our hearth, took a last look through the deserted apartments, sounding strange to us already with their 'echo and their empty tread,' and, having turned the key in the door of our once happy but now desolate dwelling, slowly and sadly the long procession moved on. Immediately, by the hands of a messenger-at-arms, a farewell shot was fired after us in the shape of a very formidable interdict, which, fortunately for me, would not, as I have said, go off till after the Sabbath. Another discharge soon followed from a reverend doctor, the clerk of Synod, in the form of a summons for some five days' rent, which time, he alleged, though incorrectly, we had tarried in the manse beyond the legal period. I notice these as specimens of the sharp practice to which we were exposed from more quarters than one.

"In recording this succession of depressing experiences, it would be deep ingratitude to forget the many mercies and

tokens for good from our Heavenly Father, by which these were alleviated. 'He stayeth the rough wind in the day of His east wind.' It was an unspeakable blessing to be sustained and cheered, instead of being weakened and hindered, as it might have been, by *her* on whom a full share of the heavy burden fell, and of whom I will say no more—less I scarcely could say—than that throughout, whether in doing or suffering, it was nobly suffered and nobly done. Streaks of light, too, in God's good time, began to appear in the horizon, giving hopeful promise that the darkest hour was past. Shortly previous to the crisis, with no prospect of accommodation in the district for my family, I fully expected to be separated from them by a long distance and for a considerable time, when, unsolicited, a farm-house, providentially vacant for a season, was placed at my disposal by a noble-minded benefactor of the cause. More than that, he gave me not only a house, but a church also, which he had built for his tenantry in that neighbourhood; and they welcomed me to be their pastor with a cordial call. Nor was this all. In the Glen, which still engaged my chief interest, a suitable site was obtained, and steps taken for the erection of a church. An elder of mine possessed a small property, completely surrounded by wide territories, on which we dared not have set foot for God's worship, no, not even on their lone heathery fells; and there, in a spot suggestive of the sweet description of the Psalmist, 'We found a place for the Lord, we found it in the fields of the wood.' There, till we could 'go into His tabernacles,' we worshipped on His footstool, the green earth, heaven alone our canopy, and He whose throne it is, our glory and defence. These my two congregations being ten miles apart, and it being desirable, for a time at least, that they should have regular supply, in Gaelic and English, I travelled twenty miles and preached four sermons every Sabbath for two summers. My hearers had increased in numbers, instead of being diminished, by the Disruption; while a mere handful was left in both parishes in connection with the now Erastianised Establishment."*

* Disr. Mss. lxii. See The Trials of the People, described *ante*, pp. 368-371.

Of the spirit in which such changes were accepted by many, we give an example in the case of Dr. Duncan, of Ruthwell. Through life he had laboured on behalf of his parishioners, both for their temporal and spiritual welfare; and after the Disruption his desire was to maintain the old kindly relations, even with those who refused to follow him. "As time rolled on," says Mrs. Duncan, "the necessities of some of those who had been most angry against him led them to seek help from their old friend. It was curious to observe that if there was any change in his demeanour at all, it was visible in an increased desire to do them service. One small incident, a type of what I mean, will explain the whole.

"A family was bereaved of a little one. Whether there being no parish minister, it would not be decent not to have one at all, or whether some better feeling dictated the act, I know not; but in spite of many unkind motives imputed to the ministers who had demitted, and such sayings as we have all heard of, the father asked Dr. Duncan to attend the funeral. His prayer was so full of love for those who had divided from his ministry, that some of the women, unable to contain themselves, rushed out of the house, and wept it out together with their Free friends. The day was hot, and the churchyard at some distance. Dr. Duncan offered to place the remains of the child in his small gig, and after some difficulty about the adjustment, he walked while they took their way to the grave. So simple an act was this with him that he did not recollect to mention it, though he came straight from the scene to carry me home from visiting a widow to whom I had walked in the morning. Nor did I hear of it till some days after, when I found the village still in a stir about it. Even the *bond Church* wives who thought he should not have been invited, and the *Free Church* wives who thought he should not have accepted the invitation, were at least agreed in this, that their old friend was their old friend still, and bore the same Christian heart to them all."

But if such were the sentiments of the parishioners, it was otherwise with the "parochial authorities." In one respect they had the power of wounding the old pastor, and they did not fail to use it. "One thing really vexed him, and only one, of all

that he resigned. Nearly thirty years before he had opened the first bank for savings in the world. It was constructed so as annually to form what he called a surplus fund, from which a secretary and treasurer might have been paid; but as he did all gratuitously the fund accumulated, and in course of years, by the vote of the governors, he was permitted to employ the fund in erecting a school and teacher's dwelling at Locharwoods, four miles from the parish school. It had been used for years as a Sabbath school and preaching station." These services he was anxious to continue, and it was evidently with some surprise that he heard of a proposal for his being excluded. "An attempt is made to shut us out of the school-house built by me out of the surplus funds of the savings bank." He wrote at once to remonstrate. "My dear Sir,—Allow me to say that my having, from conscientious motives, thrown up the emoluments of the Established Church, does not, in my opinion, materially alter my duty in this respect. . . . I did flatter myself that if there was a place in the parish to which I should be cheerfully welcomed by all classes, it would be this school-house—a building planned by my regard to the best interests of the district, and erected, I may say, at my own expense. . . . My wish is to hold prayer meetings occasionally for the religious edification *of those who choose to attend.* . . . This, one would think, is a small boon, but it is one on which I place a high value. I am sure you cannot wonder if I should think it hard were my own door to be shut in my face."

The appeal was in vain. The place was seized, and its door closed against Dr. Duncan, who, by that means, "passed it unemployed each Sabbath evening, when he went to preach in Caerlaverock parish." There was a trifling circumstance which should perhaps be mentioned, as giving completeness to the narrative. A neatly carved stone had been put up over the entrance, narrating the history of the erection, but after Dr. Duncan's exclusion, "*the tablet was torn down.*"*

But now, after the Disruption had come and gone, and trials began to accumulate, was there no repining among the ministers of the Free Church? The excitement of the conflict was over,

* For further details, see Memoir of Dr. Duncan, pp. 322-325.

and the pressure of privation was felt in their families—the pony could no longer be kept, the cow was sold, the old servants were parted with, the favour of heritors was lost or turned to bitterness, the whole worldly position was changed. And was there in the midst of all this no regret for the step they had taken? In the calm retrospect of the past, did the wish never arise that they had the power to undo what they had done?

If one gave heed to what was said all over Scotland in worldly circles, there could be no doubt as to how such questions should be answered. Before the Disruption, the opponents of the Church had been quite sure that few or none of the ministers would go out; and now after the Disruption they were just as sure that they would fain get back if they could. It was most natural for such men to think so. They were merely judging others by themselves, and to a great extent they lacked the means of measuring the power of Divine truth over the human conscience.

In referring to such matters, the common people—as is their wont—used great plainness of speech. In the parish of Edzell, Mr. Inglis tells how "James Moir, at Inchbare, a blacksmith, was talking in his smithy with some persons who had not left the Established Church. They, thinking to annoy James, said to him, 'Oh, ye're a' just like Lot's wife—ye're lookin' back again to Sodom.' James very unexpectedly turned the laugh against themselves by saying, 'No doubt it was ill wi' her for lookin' back; but it was as ill, if no waur, wi' them that didna come out ava.'"*

But though it was no use trying to annoy the blacksmith, there were others who could be made to feel. Mrs. Duncan tells of a time when she met Mr. Elliot, author of the "Horæ Apocalypticæ," and found to her surprise how far the prejudices of a good man can sometimes carry him.

"It was with feelings of sorrow, surprise, and some degree of indignant shame that I heard the Apocalyptic interpreter, Mr. Elliot, assure me that not more than six of them came out from any cause but having gone too far to recede, and that all but about six would flock back into the Established Church were

* Memorials of the Disruption in Edzell, &c., p. 17.

the way open. I am sure that, had he been aware that he was trampling on the feelings of a widow whose husband, with his two sons and two sons-in-law, had resigned their temporalities in one day, he is too humane to have done so. Yet I marvel much that a man entertaining Christian principle should judge so like the world with regard to mere matters of emolument, and I marvel more that a man who seeks to explain events veiled in prophetic vision cannot study, without the veil of prejudice, events and their causes which have occurred within a few miles of him, and amongst a people who speak his own tongue."*

The truth is, that if ever there were men fully persuaded in their own minds, they were the ministers of the Free Church; and their homes were scenes of quiet contentment and happiness, which made itself felt by all who ever crossed their thresholds.

Before the Disruption, many of their manses were visited by a literary man from England, the well-known Christian poet, James Montgomery. He belonged to a different Church, his prepossessions were all unfavourable, and this is the account he gives—"Wherever I went I came in contact with those who have now seceded from the Church, and I found them under the influence of the spirit in which they have now acted, and which has brought about this great movement. I was received into their houses; I witnessed their family devotions, and the earnestness and simplicity with which they were regularly performed. I at that time knew little of the question, and from what I had heard I had been strongly prejudiced against them. But when I went among them and saw their spirit, my prejudices were removed, for I found them not only ready to be confessors but martyrs for their principles. They have witnessed a good confession. Nearly five hundred good men have gone out at the call of duty, like Abraham, not knowing whither they went. My whole heart goes with them."†

Such was the impression made on a stranger before the Disruption, but not less emphatic were the testimonies borne

* Disr. Mss. xvi. p. 12.

† Testimonies in favour of the Free Church, &c., by the Rev. J. A. Wallace, Hawick, pp. 71, 72.

after the event. If there were two men entitled above all others to speak on the subject, they were Dr. Guthrie and Dr. Macdonald, who, in the manse and school building tours, had gone familiarly among their brethren from end to end of Scotland, and this is the report which they gave:—

"I have had occasion," says Dr. Guthrie, "to enter many of the cottages where our ministers are now living, and I say as an honest man that there never was a greater calumny than to allege that any of these men regret the step they have taken; but, . . . contented, and quiet, and happy as they are in their privations, there are many of them subsisting with their families on one-third of their former incomes."*

Not less warmly did Dr. Macdonald speak in addressing the Assembly: "We have heard it publicly stated that there are many of our country brethren lamenting sadly that they gave so much when they gave up their all for Christ, and even that there is a large number anxious to return to the blessedness of keeping all, if they could only find a door open to receive them Now, it has happened that I have been privileged to see more of them than any one in this Assembly—and that in no time of excitement, or when we were all assembled here, and felt cheered and supported in each other's society—but in the retirement of their own houses; and I feel bound to say that I have seen them happier, I believe, than they ever were before" —(here the members of Assembly lent such a universal burst of corroboration to Mr. Macdonald's statement, that his voice, though pitched in a high tone, was for some seconds inaudible) —"and so far from repenting that step, they never felt more satisfied that it was the step pointed out to them by God; and instead of longing to retrace it, they now feel thankful to God for giving them grace to take it. (Renewed plaudits)." †

But if it was thus that others spoke of them, we naturally turn to the Mss. to see what they say for themselves. At various times, as the years went on, their feelings are found recorded as they wrote them down in the quiet of their own homes; and the following extracts will serve to show what their experience really was:—

* Memoir, vol. ii. p. 71. † Disr. Mss. lv. p. 24.

On the 1st of January, 1844, Dr. Landsborough writes: "God has spared me to enter upon a new year; and how changed my circumstances since the beginning of last year. For no event in my life am I so thankful as that the Lord gave me grace to be faithful in the day of trial, and enabled me to bear witness to the honour of the Head and King of the Church." *

In similar terms Mr. Milroy speaks: "Yesterday was the anniversary of our leaving the manse at Crailing. In looking back, I have perfect satisfaction in that surrender in so blessed a cause; and I could not but feel how much cause of gratitude we have to our Heavenly Father, who has led us and fed us all along; who has sustained, and cheered, and blessed us amid circumstances of no ordinary discouragement." †

Dr. Burns, of Kilsyth, was in the forty-sixth year of his ministry, and drawing near the end of life. Three years after the Disruption, it is pleasant to see the cheerful contentment with which he meets his altered circumstances. Referring to his privations, he says: "What are all these compared with the approbation of conscience and the peace of God keeping the heart, and the honour of taking a part in upholding the Crown Rights of his Lord?" "Much personal kindness has been experienced from a truly attached people. The want of a horse has no doubt been felt, but *with staff in hand,* and occasional cheerfully proffered aid of a pony or of a car from a kind neighbour, *the old minister has got on wonderfully.*" ‡

In 1853, Mr. Wallace, of Hawick, addressed his congregation: "Now that the turmoil of the conflict is over, and an interval of ten years has elapsed, it may be admitted that we now occupy a better position that we ever had before for entering upon a calm and dispassionate review of the momentous step we have taken. . . . To these days [the time of the Disruption] we now look back with a feeling of intensest interest. They are connected with sweet associations, and with the memory of many dear friends now gone to their everlasting rest. And though there might be some sacrifices made, and some privations endured, yet they were far more than counter-balanced

* Memoir, p. 187. † Memorials of a Quiet Ministry, p. 61.
‡ Disr. Mss. xxix. p. 22.

by the kindliness of your feeling, and by the cordiality and earnestness with which you were accustomed to join in the ordinances of God's house. We therefore number them among the happiest days of our life. They are fragrant with pleasant recollections. We look back upon them as upon times of revival and refreshing from the presence of the Lord." *

In 1865, twenty-two years after the Disruption, Mr. Taylor, of Flisk, gives us another glimpse into the manse-life of Disruption ministers: "When I gave up my living in the Established Church, I never expected to receive an income exceeding £100. I had no thoughts of again occupying a manse. Yet have I been dwelling since 1844 in a pleasant manse, which for many years has been free of debt, and receiving an income of £138, raised, by the generous collection for pre-Disruption ministers, to £170. It is the doing of the Lord, and it is marvellous in our eyes." . . .

"There is another mercy for which I daily give thanks to the Lord, and that is for fixing my lot in this beautiful locality, and giving me the quiet duties of a country pastorate. It is what Henri Lacordàire coveted—'I would bury myself in the depths of the country; I would live only for a little flock, and find all my joy in God and in the fields.' . . . Often when I saunter on the knoll at the top of the garden, thinking out my Sabbath sermon; or when on a day of languor, which feeble health occasions, I walk here, yielding myself up to the fresh invigorating influences of nature; or when, in company with a friend, the social chat is interrupted to admire some opening in the varied view; or when on Sabbath evening I can refresh my thoughts with the air and calm of the silent fields, and with quiet meditation, I often feel, Can I be thankful enough to the Lord for a retreat so congenial?" †

These were the feelings of ministers, as expressed by themselves and described by others. Many worldly advantages once enjoyed had been given up, and yet they were happy. Christ has assured us that they who forsake houses and lands for His sake shall be recompensed an hundredfold even in this life. God's blessing was surely sufficient to fill the heart with satisfaction

* Pastoral Recollections, &c., by the Rev. J. A. Wallace, pp. 115, 123.

† Disr. Mss. xxxvii. Part II. pp. 21, 24.

and peace, and give such a relish for the mercies of life as might well sweeten a far harder lot than any which the ministers of the Free Church were called to encounter. The Apostles speak of having nothing, and yet it seemed as if they possessed all things. The reproach of Christ was once felt to be greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, and why should men not believe that something of this was once more experienced by those who had sought to follow their Divine Master in the face of trial and sacrifice. Under many a lowly roof they were dwelling beneath the shadow of the Almighty, and the sense of His love was the joy and the rejoicing of their hearts.

Peculiar tenderness belongs to the dying testimonies of certain fathers of the Church, who, after having long endured the burden and heat of the day, were drawing near the end of their course. In the beginning of the year 1846, Dr. Duncan was in Liverpool raising money for a manse, intended, not for himself, but for his colleague and successor at Ruthwell. He was within less than three weeks of his death, but a friend writes: "He was in excellent spirits the whole time, and seemed to participate in all that was going forward with great animation and pleasure, referring to old stories with much enjoyment and cheerfulness. I fear his life was shortened by over-exertion in the cause he espoused." "This surmise was perhaps favoured by the lively pleasure with which he spoke of the state and prospects of the Free Church, and the interest which he manifested in its progress and prosperity. . . .

"On one of these occasions in which he was thus expatiating, bearing his testimony to the faithfulness of God in sustaining and comforting His faithful ministers and people, a friend who was present expressed the very common sentiment that the Free Church movement had been occasioned by *passion* more than *principle*, and appealed to Dr. Duncan whether, on a calm review of the past, he was not conscious of some regret. 'Regret!' he exclaimed, with deep feeling—'what have I to regret? Can a man regret having had grace to act up to his principles? No, God forbid. Were I placed in similar circumstances to-morrow, it would be my only happiness to do as I have done.'" *

* Memoir, p. 334.

Mr. Campbell, of Kiltearn, Ross-shire, "resigned one of the best livings in the Church at the call of duty, thereby incurring altogether a loss of some thousands of pounds for conscience' sake." He had large experience both of the sacrifices and hard labour of Disruption times. Referring to 1843, when engaged on deputation-work, he says: "In my absence my family removed from the manse to an old wreck of a house three miles from the church, which previously had been unoccupied for fifteen years. Notwithstanding considerable repairs made on the house at my own expense, it was most uncomfortable. Two of our domestics almost lost their lives in consequence of the desperate state of the house." At a subsequent period, amidst the infirmities of advancing years, he writes: "My days are now drawing to a close, and I have great cause to praise the Lord for His goodness to me and mine. He has borne with my manifold infirmities and shortcomings. . . . Having now had the trial of twenty-two years as a Disruption minister, I bless the Lord for honouring me to be one of that band of witnesses for Christ." *

Such testimonies, however, may now be fittingly closed in the words of Dr. Brewster, of Craig, who, like his more celebrated brother, Sir David Brewster, was a man of distinguished talent and culture, and possessed literary powers of the highest order. When he entered the ministry, evangelical religion was at a low ebb within the Establishment, but with all his gifts and talents he threw himself into the work of the Lord, and soon won for himself a high position in the respect and esteem of all classes of the community. Modest and retiring almost to a fault, he had kept himself far from the din of controversy, yet, when the crisis of the Ten Years' Conflict came, the principles of the Free Church had no more intrepid defender and none more resolute to make all the sacrifices that were demanded.

The circumstances in which he gave his testimony were remarkable. About a year before his death he was attacked by severe illness,† and brought to the brink of the grave; and while lying in that state a report had gone abroad that he and

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Dingwall. † *Ibid.* Presb. of Brechin.

others of his brethren had repented of having left the Established Church at the Disruption. The crisis of the illness passed; for a time, in the good providence of God, he was restored to some measure of health, and one of the first uses which he made of returning strength was to write and publish, for the benefit of his people, an account of his experience in the immediate view of death. Among other topics, he speaks of the rumour above referred to: "We know what has been said as to our repentings, but I am bound to testify, and am bold to testify, that of such repentings I had no experience. On the contrary, it was one of my chief rejoicings that we had taken such a step. . . . This I may be said to give as my dying testimony—for I cannot well be nearer death than I was supposed to be, and at least thought myself to be. In that solemn prospect, *it was one of my greatest consolations that I was dying as a poor minister of the Free Church of Scotland.*"*

Thus, in the quiet retirement of their country parishes, these honoured fathers of the Free Church prepared to pass away. No doubt or misgiving troubled them as to the path of duty which they had followed in 1843. The voice of the Master who in that day of trial had called them to leave all and follow Him was still in their ears. Not in the heat of controversy or amidst the excitement of public meetings was their testimony given. Mr. Campbell, of Kiltearn, stands as one "ready to be offered," knowing that the "time of his departure is at hand;" but ere he goes he gives thanks to God for the honour put on him as a witness for Christ at the Disruption. Dr. Brewster lies on what is felt to be his dying bed, and in the calm retrospect, it fills him with gratitude to think of the part he had been permitted to take in connection with the Free Church—gratitude none the less deep because of those privations in the midst of which he must end his days. The short year of restored health passed away, and death came. "He was not, for God took him;" and never was mourning more sincere* than when his sorrowing people bore his remains to the lonely burying-ground of St. Skeoch,—

> "And left him there in his house of clay
> Till the glorious morn of the Advent Day."

* See lines in *Free Church Magazine*, iv. 144.

Part III.

Difficulties of the Position—Progress.

XXXI. Refusal of Sites.

In following the history of Disruption times, we come now to those cases of site-refusing which were brought before a Committee of the House of Commons. A gratifying change has since taken place in the feelings of our landed proprietors; but, while this is cordially acknowledged, we must not forget what is due to the memory of those friends and supporters—many of them men in humble life—who stood true to their conscientious convictions, and loyal to their Church in the face of trials which it is difficult to think of as having occurred in the times in which we live.

It was no wonder that the Free Church should have met with difficulties at the outset. Proprietors who had keenly resisted the Disruption movement, could not willingly submit to have the churches and manses of the outgoing ministers built on their lands. But in many of these cases the feeling of hostility soon began to give way. The landed proprietors of Scotland, as a class, have the most kindly regard for the people on their estates, and though they might be angry with the Free Church—some of them were very angry—yet when they saw their tenants and country neighbours, industrious, intelligent, God-fearing men, meeting for Divine service in the open air, exposed to all the hardships of the climate, their better feelings prevailed, and for the most part they made concessions, and met the wishes of the people in a frank and generous spirit.*

Unfortunately, there were some extensive properties on which a different course was followed. Sites were persistently refused,

* Report on Sites, i. p. 7, q. 95.

and much painful feeling was called forth. In the Christian Church, when one member suffers all the members suffer with it; and for many years at the approach of winter, as each successive Sabbath came round, there was not a stormy wind blew from the heavens, nor a shower of snow fell, that men did not think of their brethren compelled to worship God in the open air among the cold fir woods of Strathspey, or shivering on the bleak uplands of Wanlockhead. The pity is that these things cannot be told without referring to the conduct of those proprietors with whom the trials originated.

During the first winter things were left to take their course, and congregations had to bear as best they could the perils of exposure. The second winter, however, was more severe, and when the stormy weather had fairly set in, it was felt that something must be done. Deputations were sent to make inquiries on the spot. At the Assembly of 1845, the subject was taken up in earnest, a Committee was named to take charge of the subject, and by a most fortunate choice Mr. Graham Spiers was appointed convener. Connected by birth and marriage with the landed gentry of Scotland, Mr. Spiers was known to the public as Sheriff of Mid-Lothian, and still more as a man of ability, whose high-toned Christian character and calm courtesy commanded universal respect among all ranks of society. Amidst the delicate and difficult negotiations of that trying time, the Church might well be thankful that the interests of her people were in the hands of one on whom such perfect reliance could be placed.

In entering on their work, the first thing done by the Committee was to proceed to London, and approach the leading site-refusers in private, in order to offer explanations, and, if possible, remove misconceptions. "We had no wish," said Dr. Buchanan, "to brand any man in the face of the public, and in the face of Parliament." This well-meant effort almost entirely failed, and a public movement became absolutely necessary. A discussion took place both in the House of Lords and Commons, and the hope was expressed by leading men of all parties that without any specific enactment sites would be granted through the pressure of public opinion. Little effect, however, was pro-

duced by these statements. The leading opponents resolutely held their ground, and at last, on the motion of Mr. Bouverie, M.P. for the Kilmarnock Burghs, the House of Commons named a Committee of Enquiry on the 9th of March, 1847.

It is well known that there is no more searching ordeal through which any such question can be put than a Committee of the House of Commons. Certainly on this occasion the recusant landlords had every reason to be satisfied with the friends who represented them in the course of the inquiry. Sir James Graham especially, with all his great ability and practised skill, proved himself an eager partisan, sifting every part of the evidence with a view to discredit the Free Church and her claims. One great benefit, however, has resulted from this. The evidence presented to the Committee, which such an advocate was unable to shake, may now be quoted and relied on with the most implicit confidence, and we shall accordingly freely avail ourselves of it in the following pages.

Of the cases which attracted public notice, one of the first was that of Ballater, on Deeside, in the neighbourhood of Balmoral, the favourite residence of the Queen, and at that time of Prince Albert. The proprietor, Mr. Farquharson of Monaltrie, had recently died, and a site had been refused by his trustees, one of whom happened to be a personal friend of Mr. Spiers. Availing himself of this circumstance, he wrote on behalf of the people, but was told in reply that however painful it was to refuse any request of his, yet the trustees knew the sentiments of "the late Monaltrie," and it was their imperative duty to do what they were sure he would have done—the site must be refused.*

This, however, was only the first step. In the village of Ballater there is a public hall, which the owners were accustomed to let on hire for meetings of many different kinds, and the congregation had rented it on the usual terms. The trustees, however, were what is called the Feudal Superiors of the place. They claimed the right to prohibit the use of the hall, went to law before the Sheriff of Aberdeen, and got a decision in their favour, closing the door against the members of the

* Report on Sites, i. p. 100.

Free Church, who were at the same time saddled with the expense of the lawsuit.

Driven thus from the village, where every available building was under the power of the trustees, they met during the first winter on an exposed muir in the open air. Afterwards, they found partial shelter in a rude sheep-cote which one of the farmers allowed them to occupy. It was nine feet in breadth, the walls five feet high, without windows. The roof, of course, was low; the place dark and comfortless; and the people proposed to heighten the walls and put on a new roof, thinking, in their simplicity, that as this would improve the property at their own expense, no objection would be offered. But the farm was on the Monaltrie estate, and the trustees at once interposed to forbid the improvement. The congregation had no desire for a second experience of the Sheriff Court, and had to submit.

But necessity is the mother of invention. If they could not heighten the roof, might they not get room by lowering the floor? Fortunately at this point the trustees drew a line in their favour. Men were set to work, and by burrowing into the ground greater space was got overhead between the audience and the rafters. There were, however, certain drawbacks. In rainy weather, the water which ran from the hillside could with difficulty be kept out, while the leakage from the roof added to the discomfort. After all, as Dr. Guthrie remarked, Divine service had to be carried on while the congregation were "sitting in a hole." *

Ballater, it should be remembered, stands amidst the beautiful scenery of Deeside, and is a favourite health-resort in the North of Scotland. Among the visitors who came from many different parts of the country, it was the subject of much remark to see the circumstances in which a Christian Congregation were compelled to worship God, not only in full view of the public, but in the immediate neighbourhood of the Queen and her Court.

Further to the north, similar trials were met with on a larger scale in Strathspey, where the property of the Earl of Seafield

* Report on Sites, i. p. 71, qq. 1081-1088. See also Illustrations of Toleration. Edinburgh, 1846?, p. 4.

BALLATER.

is described as extending twenty-eight miles in length by fifteen in mean breadth.* Over this wide district the adherents of the Free Church were dependent on the will of a single proprietor, but there was every reason to anticipate the kindest treatment at his hands. On his other estates at Cullen and Glenurquhart sites had been freely granted, while in Strathspey itself—as Mr. Dickson, banker, a member of the Free Church testifies—Lord Seafield was very much "respected and beloved;" "no landlord could be more so." † Unfortunately, there were evil advisers at hand. A hostile factor got up a petition—as factors well know how—urging that sites should be refused. The signatures were not numerous—twelve in all, one of the witnesses said; but it is to be regretted that we find among them the names of the Established Church ministers in the district, ‡ one of whom was bold enough to tell the Committee of the House of Commons that he did not think he would object to Roman Catholics obtaining sites, § but would resist the Free Church to the uttermost. To such counsellors Lord Seafield deferred, and all along Strathspey much hardship had to be endured.

The parish of Duthil may be taken as an example. The people in large numbers joined the Free Church, and having to worship in the open-air, chose as their place of meeting a fir wood near Carrbridge ‖—a portion of those grand old pine forests for which Strathspey has so long been famous. A rude pulpit was set up, round which in all weathers the people gathered, often in circumstances painful to witness. Early in the winter of 1844, the Presbytery of the bounds took an opportunity, during a severe snowstorm, to appeal to Lord Seafield. "We cannot believe that it is your Lordship's wish to oblige them to continue meeting in the open air at the risk of health and even of life, in such weather as the present." ¶ It should be remembered that the cold of that northern district is often intense, and that the fir wood of Carrbridge lies some 700 feet above the sea level. The adverse influence, however, was too strong, and the appeal was in vain.

* Report on Sites, ii. p. 22, q. 1841.
† *Ibid.* ii. p. 34, q. 2103.
‡ *Ibid.* ii. p. 24, q. 1879.
§ *Ibid.* ii. p. 57, q. 2685, 2701.
‖ *Ibid.* ii. p. 24, q. 1886.
¶ *Ibid.* ii. p. 142.

The pastoral care of all these congregations in Upper Strathspey had devolved on the only outgoing minister, Mr. Shepherd,

DUTHIL.*

of Kingussie. Often in going to Duthil the weather he met with was severe. On 22nd November, 1846,† there was inces-

* The above woodcut is taken from "Illustrations of the Principles of Toleration in Scotland. Edinburgh: Kennedy" (1846?). The views were prepared at the time when the subject began to be spoken of in Parliament, and care was taken to secure accuracy. At page 440 another of the views is given—that of Wanlockhead.

† Report on Sites, ii. p. 16, q. 1687 *seq.*

sant rain during the whole service. During sermon in January, 1847, it rained "without interruption, and there was high wind." Another visit was yet more remarkable. The service had been announced, but a snowstorm had begun on the previous Saturday, and a message had been sent from the Duthil elders requesting him not to come, "it was impossible they could stand it out." Mr. Shepherd had twenty miles to drive, but owing to the scanty supply of preachers the arrangements once made had to be carried out, and he went to do his duty. "It was very stormy," he says, "and I had great difficulty in getting from my house to the place." On arriving, about 200 people were found assembled—one-third of the usual number—and the first thing was to have the snow cleared away from the pulpit, the precentor's desk, and the seats on which they required to sit. This was trying work—not easy for the people who had to attend on the services, and specially difficult for the officiating minister, who had to drive forty miles going and returning through the falling snow.

While these things were going on in Strathspey, there were similar times of trial in Skye and Uist among the tenantry of Lord Macdonald. To all their petitions his invariable reply was, "I must positively decline to give a site;" and thus, over the whole of his extensive estates in Portree, Kilmuir, Sleat, Stenscholl, Uig, and Trumisgarry, the people had to submit to severe hardships. The one outgoing minister who remained in Skye to uphold single-handed the cause of the Free Church was the Rev. Roderick Macleod, of Snizort, a man of rare force of character, who has been already referred to in these pages. It would take long to tell the sacrifices and labours which he went through. As at Duthil, the weather in the open air was often trying. At Kilmuir, he speaks of conducting the whole service under very heavy rain; and at Uig, during sermon on one occasion, it began to snow, the fall being so heavy that at the close he says: "I could hardly distinguish" the congregation from the ground on which they sat, "except by their faces."* It would be difficult anywhere else in all Christen-

* Report on Sites, iii. p. 33, q. 4647.

dom to find ministers willing to preach, and people willing to listen, during such a service.

At the hamlet of Paible,* in North Uist, the circumstances are given in greater detail. The people had set about erecting a rude shelter of turf and stone, on what was called a common, where the ground was of little value. The factor, after warning them in vain, came personally on the scene, got together the carts belonging to members of the Established Church, and removed the materials to a distance. When the next term came, he summoned out of their lands all the crofters who had taken part in the erection, actually ejected some of the more prominent, and imposed fines of from £1 to £2 on those who were suffered to remain.†

The poor Islemen, however, did not flinch. In March, 1847, when Dr. Macintosh Mackay came to preach at Paible, he had —owing to the state of the weather—to stand within the door of a cart-shed in order to get some protection. The congregation "stood all round on a level piece of ground sheltered by the walls of the houses on one side. It was a stormy day, and there were heavy showers of sleet and rain." Afterwards they met under the shelter of a peculiar jutting rock near the hamlet. "I could compare it to nothing but what is sometimes seen on the quarter-deck of a vessel—an oval skylight." In all states of the weather it was possible to get some shelter by going round to the point opposite to that from which the wind blew. ‡

On these estates, however, there were worse things than the storms of winter. The crofters and small farmers, having no leases, were at the mercy of the landlord, and, as the factor admitted, a good many of them were charged to leave because they supported the Free Church. "He (the landlord) gave me a list, and said, 'Here is a list of fellows that must have notice to quit.'"§ How many were actually expelled does not appear, but one or two cases may be given to show how completely his Lordship was in earnest.

Mr. Donald Matheson was a member of the Free Church at

* Report on Sites, ii. p. 111, q. 3674 *seq.*; iii. p. 9, q. 4442 *seq.*

† *Ibid.* iii. pp. 23, 24, qq. 4440-4459. ‡ *Ibid.* ii. p. 111, q. 3684.

§ *Ibid.* iii. p. 61, q. 5285. This was afterwards attempted to be explained away.

Portree, became a collector for the Sustentation Fund, and referring to the year 1846, states:* "I was warned out of the lands which my forefathers had held from immemorial ages." On appealing to the factor, Mr. Mackinnon, of Corry, he was told it had been resolved to remove him from the property Before submitting, however, he determined to try the effect of a personal interview, and with some difficulty obtained from the factor Lord Macdonald's London address. He at once started for Edinburgh, took the London steamboat, and, with a strange mixture of simplicity and shrewdness, recounts his adventures. On landing, the first thing he did was to get into a cab, and direct the man to go straight to the address he had received. For some reason, it took them three hours driving through the streets before the house could be found, and then it was only to ascertain that his Lordship had gone on a visit to Yorkshire. To Yorkshire accordingly he followed, and among other incidents he describes the great satisfaction he had at an inn where he stayed, in proving to his host—so he thought—the superiority of Highland politeness over that of Englishmen. On arriving in Yorkshire, Mr. Matheson went at once to find Lord Macdonald, but he was not to be seen, having gone out shooting for the day. Next morning, no time was lost in making an early call, but he was again disappointed. Lord Macdonald had left for London that morning at seven o'clock. Nothing daunted, he started again in pursuit, took the coach for London, and next day succeeded in obtaining an interview. It proved, however, the reverse of satisfactory. "He wanted to know my name before my admission to his presence. On being introduced, he asked, 'What is it you want?' 'I wish that your Lordship would be pleased to look at my humble petition.' He turned round, and said, in a voice so loud as to make the whole fabric re-echo, 'No, no; I am glad Corry has dealt with you in the way he has done—away, away!'—calling on his valet to come and wait on me. I indeed thought that if I was to say a single word he would use me nothing better than Baalam would his ass." On retiring, Mr. Matheson at once forwarded his petition to Lord Macdonald by post, started for Liverpool, and arrived at home two days before the term at which he had to remove.

* Personal Narrative, Parker Mss.

The breaking-up of his home was painful. "My dear spouse was confined on her deathbed." Through fear of the factor, she had to be removed to "very poor and insufficient accommodation, and there she ended her earthly career," and with a sore heart he laid her in the grave.

Driven from his farm, the energy of the man did not forsake him. He betook himself to business as a shipper and provision merchant, and seems to have prospered. It is strange to observe how it brought him again in contact with those who had tried to get rid of him.

A year and nine months after that visit to London, Lord Macdonald and his factor "were standing at the quay at my potato vessel. I went out, and Corry introduced me politely to his Lordship, and said, 'Lord Macdonald wants some potatoes for seed, and I want some also; but *unfortunately we have no money,* and maybe your manner of dealing would not allow of giving us credit for three months.' I said, 'You are quite welcome to as many as you want.' Next season the Inspector of Poor called on Corry, and told him that the merchant who used to supply him with meal for the poor" (the parish paupers) "would give him no more, because he was not yet paid for what they got. Corry bid him come to me, and try if I would supply him for a month. I told him I would supply him for a twelvemonth without money, but that the amount would have to be paid on that day, or they would be put to expense." When the time for payment came, no money was forthcoming. Legal steps were taken. Lord Macdonald and his factor begged for indulgence, but Mr. Matheson was firm. The whole amount, with interest and legal expenses, was paid, and the intercourse of the nobleman with his former tenant was at an end.

The case of one of the ministers—the Rev. Norman M'Leod—is not less remarkable.* He had been settled at Trumisgarry, in North Uist, and joined the Free Church in 1843, with nearly the whole Protestant population of the district. His living was one of the so-called Parliamentary Churches, and there being no manse, he rented from Lord Macdonald a small farm on which, at his own expense, he had built a

* Report on Sites, iii. pp. 18-22, qq. 4355-4417.

cottage "with six fireplaces." After the Disruption, at the first term he received notice to quit. "I trust," he wrote in reply, "your Lordship does not really intend to drive me, with my young and helpless family, out of my present dwelling-house. I am willing to give any rent another will offer, and should your Lordship not choose to give the farm on any terms, I would be satisfied with the house, and grass for two cows and a horse." He mentions also that he had been at considerable expense in improving the farm, from which he had as yet received little or no return. The answer to this request was a peremptory refusal sent through the factor. "I have also to intimate to you that Lieutenant John Macdonald is to get the lands possessed by you, and you should make the best bargain you can with him about the house. It will be against you his not getting a lease of the lands, for as yet Lord Macdonald has only agreed to let him have the place from year to year." The new tenant holding the place on a tenure so precarious could not of course give value for the premises. The sum of £40 was all that Mr. M'Leod could obtain for unexhausted improvements, and for the house he had built, and he was left to extract what comfort he could from the closing sentence of the factor's letter. "I can only again express my regret at the disagreeable situation you are placed in, but hope that you may get well over it, and with kind compliments to Mrs. M'Leod,—I am, &c."

It is incredible that the nobleman and factor intended to take an undue advantage. Their object must simply have been to drive Mr. Macleod from the Island, in the hope that the people would return to the Established Church.

But the ministers of the Free Church were not easily driven. The nearest house Mr. M'Leod could get was on the farm of Callan, about twenty miles distant from the scene of his labours. It was in a bad state of repair, and the roads were such that he states: "I cannot take a horse within three miles of it." The distances were great, and the weather often so inclement that, "with the exception of one or two occasions, he did not think that he ever reached his congregation and got back to his house without being drenched through, and this even though covered with six or seven ply of as good cloth as the Highlands

could produce." * In the face of all difficulties, however, Mr. Macleod stood to his post. The time came when a comfortable church and manse were provided; and there down to the present day, 1881, he remains,† after a long ministry, the pastor of an attached flock, while of those who oppressed him, it must be said that their place knows them no more.

The island of Eig, one of the smaller Hebrides, was the scene of another of these struggles.‡ There was a Protestant population of about 200 persons, who all joined the Free Church with three exceptions—the servant in the Established Church Manse, the ground-officer on the estate, and his father, a pauper. The whole island belonged to Professor Macpherson, of Aberdeen, who refused a site. Already in these pages § we have seen, from the vivid description of Hugh Miller, how it fared with the people for church accommodation; but for the outgoing minister (Mr. Swanson) and his family, no house-room could be got. If he had chosen to accept a call he might soon have found a more advantageous position elsewhere, but he had seen among his people the promise of spiritual blessing, and when a call came unsought, he told the Assembly that if he might ask a favour it was that they would leave him where he was.

Denied accommodation on the island, the nearest residence he could obtain was at Ornsay, in Skye, across many miles of stormy sea. There his family were settled, while his own home was really on the deep. To visit and preach to his people, he procured a small vessel, the *Betsy*, on board which so much of his time was spent that she came to be spoken of as the floating manse. In the autumn of 1843, when the Assembly met at Glasgow, it was announced that the minister of Eig was coming up, bringing his manse with him. The idea of seeing her on her way as she came up the Clyde running before the wind, with the minister "at home" on board, was sufficiently romantic; but when men went to "call at the manse," she was found to be

* Blue Book, 1848, p. 295.

† Since this was written, and while it is passing through the press, intelligence comes of his death "in a good old age." He was in his 80th year.

‡ Report on Sites, iii. pp. 12-18, qq. 4294-4354. § Page 243.

a poor vessel of twelve tons burden, some thirty feet in length, by eleven in breadth, utterly unfit to contend with the storms of the Atlantic.

Connected with the *Betsy* there is a child's story told by Mr. W. Dickson in the *Children's Record* (1844), which brings back some of the trials of that time. At the removal from the Manse of Eig, while the furniture was being packed, Mr. Swanson set sail for Ornsay, taking with him his son, a child five years of age. It was a grand thing at first for "Billy" to go with his father in the ship, but by-and-by he could not understand his new home. His mother was amissing; his father had to make the porridge; they had nobody but John Stewart, the sailor, for a servant-girl. He tried hard to be manly, but the wind began to blow. Billy got sick, and lay down on the cabin floor, crying to be taken home. "My boy," his father said, "You have no home now." "I never so felt the desolateness of my condition," Mr. Swanson declared, "as when the cry of my boy, 'Home, home,' was ringing in my ears." Billy sobbed himself asleep.

It is needless to recount the various efforts made to obtain a site. Professor Macpherson said he was afraid of perpetuating religious dissension on the island—an odd objection in a case where the Protestants were virtually unanimous — the only jarring element being that which came from himself at Aberdeen.

After the hardships of the first winter a petition, signed by the whole Protestant population, was sent applying a second time for a site. Mr. Swanson was on the best terms with the few adherents of the Establishment, and with one exception they forwarded a separate application to the effect that Mr. Swanson's health was failing, and that they could not bear to see the hardships to which he was subjected. The Professor replied that he was sorry to hear of it, but he must do his duty even though it was painful. He was a professor in Old Aberdeen; he must uphold the Established Church; and no site could be granted.*

* When attention was called to the matter, five sites were offered. Mr. Swanson gives the details of the one which was "by far the best." The offer could hardly have been serious.—Report, iii. p. 17, q. 4326.

Meanwhile Mr. Swanson's life was in danger. The cabin of his vessel was a small place—twelve feet by six. When closed on account of the weather, it soon got overheated, and to pass out in cold and storm, as he often had to do, to take his place on deck, was a trial which few constitutions with the training of a clergyman could be expected to stand. And there were other dangers. Hugh Miller was his companion for a time, and in his well-known work, "The Cruise of the *Betsy*," has with his own graphic power shown the kind of perils which were met with even during the best months of summer. Dr. Mackintosh Mackay, then of Dunoon, who knew the circumstances well, remarks that, "when one thinks of the vessel which Mr. Swanson had to make his home—an unseaworthy, sorry craft, which seamen would style a mere rattle-trap, and of the dangers of that coast exposed to the storms of the Atlantic—we may thank God that the history of the Free Church escaped the recording of a tragical story."

Another of these cases occurred in the Island of Coll, which has belonged from time immemorial to the Clan Maclean. One of the chieftains in former days is said to have become a Protestant, at a time when the people still adhered to the Roman Catholic Church. He saw no reason why the clan should not believe what the chief believed, and he took energetic measures to enforce his views, driving them before him to the Protestant Church. Protestantism thus came to be known in the island as the "religion of the yellow cane," from the colour of the stick which the chief had used to second his arguments while actively dealing with the people.*

In 1843 the island belonged to one of his descendants, who resided on another property in Mull, where he took an attitude of keen hostility to the Free Church.

It was reserved, however, for the men of Coll to make the landlord feel that times had changed. Though nearly the whole population of the island had joined the Free Church, the chief believed that if proper arguments were addressed to them, and if his personal influence were brought to bear, they would return to the Establishment. He engaged a minister in whom

* Report on Sites, ii. p. 108, q. 3615.

he had confidence to accompany him to Coll; sent word fixing a particular Sabbath, and invited his clansmen and dependents—the whole population of the island—to come and meet him.

Duly at the appointed time the chief was on the spot with his champion. The people whom he had called were seen gathering along the roads, but instead of meeting him at the Established Church, they kept streaming past, on their way to the Free Church service in the open air. It was in vain that the chief addressed them, placing himself on the road along which they had to go, reasoning and remonstrating with groups and with individuals, urging them to come and at least give his friend a hearing.* Their reply was a respectful but firm refusal. "Ask us anything but this," they said, "and we are ready to comply; we will serve you—we will enlist as soldiers or join the navy if you wish—we will follow you as our fathers followed your fathers in the days of old—we will stand by you to the last,—but our consciences are our own, and our religious convictions we cannot surrender." To that resolution they stood firm. Inside the threshold of the Established Church they could not be got; and yet Dr. Mackay, who narrates the facts, declares that "there is a very strong feeling of attachment to Mr. Maclean and his family." They are "universally beloved by the people."†

On the Island of Mull there is an extensive parish—Torosay—where the incidents of 1843 deserve to be recorded. The people in considerable numbers joined the Free Church, and applied to Mr. Campbell of Possil, the only proprietor on whose lands a suitable site could be got. But, unfortunately, his feelings against the Free Church were particularly keen. The circumstances and incidents, however, will be best understood from the following narrative by the Rev. J. A. Fletcher of Bothwell:—

"The greater number of the parishioners who adhered to the Free Church lived at the small village of Lochdonhead, about 2½ miles from the parish church, and here, consequently, the con-

* Report on Sites, ii. p. 107.

† *Ibid.* ii. p. 107.

gregation usually met for public worship. But a place of worship, in the ordinary sense of the term, they had not, for many years subsequent to the Disruption. The proprietor of that part of the parish, in other respects a most generous landlord, and an elder in the Established Church, persistently refused all appeals for a site, though approached respectfully by petition from the people, and by letter from Sheriff Graham Speirs, the Convener of the Church's Committee on Sites. The people, thus driven to shift as best they could, met ordinarily for worship in a gravel-pit, which during spring tides was under high-water mark. In this gravel-pit a canvas tent was erected, which was seldom sufficient to accommodate all the worshippers who assembled. Indeed, I remember to have seen, on more than one occasion, the preacher, some neighbouring minister—for not till 1869 did they have a settled minister in the congregation—take up his position at the door of the crowded tent, facing outwards, so that the rest of the audience, some seated on stones, some reclining on the heather and bracken which grew in the vicinity of the gravel-pit, might hear him to advantage. When the weather was fine, the congregation could meet even in a gravel-pit in some degree of comfort. But on the west coast, so proverbial for wind and rain, long spells of fine weather are, of course, rare, so that the people had often to assemble in circumstances most uncomfortable, and in the highest degree unfavourable for the becoming worship of God. I remember having to sit outside the tent along with many others, some of them frail, delicate women, my mother being among the number, during pelting showers of hail. I shall never forget the touching sight of an old man—a Waterloo veteran—who sat not far from me on one occasion. He was sitting on a large rough stone, clad in tartan, his grey locks blown about his face, bonnet in hand, stoutly defying the storm, sternly refraining from what he feared might be the irreverent act of covering his head, even in such circumstances, while engaged in the worship of God. But bad as wind and rain and hail were, this faithful band of worshippers had sometimes to contend with a foe more relentless than any of these. For sometimes the tide rose so high during worship that preacher and people had not only to quit the tent

but the gravel-pit as well, and thus continue the service, in spite of all restrictions, *above* high-water mark.

"In connection with these encroachments of the tide, I have often heard a pathetic story which, in these days of comfortable and even luxurious places of worship, is worth the telling. It was the communion Sabbath. A large congregation filled the tent, and spread themselves over every available seat within reach of the preacher's voice. The sacrament was dispensed, and the minister was delivering the after-table address, standing, as I have already described him, looking outwards to the larger part of the congregation, who could not be accommodated in the tent. An eyewitness has often described the scene to me somewhat as follows:—'I was seated near the minister, at the door of the tent, earnestly listening, when by-and-by my attention was diverted by an unaccountable commotion among those who were seated within the tent. I could not understand the cause of the commotion which was evidently spreading, so that those sitting nearest me began also to be affected. My feet were stretched out before me, resting, not on the ground, but on a stone which supported the end of a plank that did duty as a seat on the occasion. At last I observed the minister looking towards the ground in an uneasy manner, as if even he had been seized by the spirit of restlessness that was disturbing the occupants of the tent. Looking to the ground also, I at once perceived the cause of it all. The tide had crawled up unperceived, and there sat the congregation—not one left his seat—and there stood the preacher, all ankle-deep in the tide, which had thus stealthily crept up to them while they were solemnly engaged in the most sacred rite of the Church. The preacher drew his address to a close, a short parting psalm was sung, for the spot was on the margin of a shallow, land-locked bay, in which the tide rose slowly; the benediction was pronounced, and the congregation, many of them moved to tears, quietly dispersed to their homes.'

"The tent, as may be easily supposed, could not long withstand the combined attack of the elements, and it soon became useless as a place of worship. After it was destroyed, though the people still worshipped in the open air when the weather was

fine, they had to find accommodation during boisterous weather as best they could, among the houses of friends to the cause. Among these was the blacksmith of the village, M'Kane, a devoted Free Churchman. At one end of his smithy was a wooden shed, in which he shod horses when the weather was too inclement to permit of his doing so in the open air. Into this shed the congregation crowded during rough weather. M'Kane, however, was a tenant at will, and soon he got warning to quit from the proprietor. The impression then was, and still is, among those who remember the circumstances, that M'Kane was turned out of his home because he gave the use of his wretched shed to the Free Church congregation.

"My father, who could not be banished at will, among others, received the Free Church ministers into his house; and one of my earliest recollections is seeing the English-speaking portion of the congregation worship in our house, while the Gaelic-speaking portion, being by far the larger, had to resort to the barn. The proprietor, still resolved to "stamp out" the Free Church, if possible, expressed unmeasured indignation, and uttered threats of expulsion at the end of my father's lease. Of course, to neither threats nor indignation did my father pay any heed, but continued, if possible, more zealously than ever to befriend Free Church ministers, and to help the Free Church cause. The upshot is, that he is still in the same house, while the estate of Torosay is in the possession of strangers."*

It was hard enough to be worshipping down below high-water mark, but on the opposite coast of the mainland, at Strontian, the congregation had to go further out to sea. The whole district of Ardnamurchan was the property of Sir James Riddell, extending over an area some 40 miles in length.† Many of the people joined the Free Church, and forwarded a respectful petition, asking for sites. His reply was a refusal, and the people of Strontian had to meet—which they did to the number of about 500‡—in the open air. At communion seasons, and at other times, Mr. M'Lean of Tobermory held service on the hillside, often in severe weather, and

* Disr. Mss. lxxxii. pp. 1-4. † Report on Sites, i. p. 8, q. 125 *seq.*
‡ *Ibid.* iii. p. 2, q. 4120 *seq.*

sometimes when the congregation "was very wet." Mr. M'Rae, of Knockbain, has preached to them with snow on the ground, and when "it was laying snow" at the time.* At the summer communion he has had an audience of 2000 gathered from Strontian and the neighbouring districts.

The refusal of sites by the proprietor of 40 miles' landed estates† was a serious matter, but men at that time were not easily baffled. A floating church was proposed, which might be anchored in some sheltered bay near the beach, and give accommodation to the people till better days came round. The idea was eagerly taken up, subscriptions were raised, plans carefully drawn out, the vessel was contracted for at an expense of £1400, and much interest was felt as her construction went on in one of the building yards of the Clyde, under the skilful superintendence of Robert Brown, Esq. of Fairlie. Then came the launch, and the voyage from Greenock to Loch Sunart. At first there was some difficulty as to a proper anchorage for the vessel. Mr. Graham Spiers, Convener of Committee, had at one time served in the Royal Navy, and, accompanied by a naval friend, he went down in July, 1846, to fix on the site. The best place, safest for the ship, and most convenient for the people, would have been just under the windows of Sir James Riddell's Mansion, but, as a matter of good taste, another was chosen‡ two miles off, and there, at a point about 150 yards from the shore, the vessel was safely moored.

How gladly the people left the storm-beaten hillside for this strange Highland church of the sea, need not be said. It was a singular spectacle on each returning Sabbath morning, as the hour of public worship drew near, to see the boats coasting along from north and south, each with its contingent of hearers, while numerous groups could be descried far inland, wending their way down from the hills to where the floating church lay moored. Men speak of it as a stirring scene, when ropes and cables were run out from the beach, and the boats were rapidly passed backwards and forwards, conveying the worshippers on

* Report on Sites, iii. p. 11, q. 4260 *seq.*

† *Ibid.* i. p. 8, q. 138 *seq.*

‡ *Ibid.* i. p. 9, q. 144.

board. In winter, the hearers came from a distance of eight or nine miles, and in summer from a still wider circuit. In rough weather it was no slight undertaking to get so many people on board. Even in summer, when all was calm, it was a tedious operation, and not unfrequently darkness was setting in before all were again on shore.* The numbers who assembled depended on the reputation of the minister expected to preach, and the people had their own way of testing the esteem in which the different clergymen were held. It was found that, for every hundred hearers, the vessel sank an inch in the water, Nothing, therefore, could be easier than to keep the register. They could tell to an inch the popularity of every minister who came. A depression of six inches told that a congregation of 600 had been drawn together, and on some occasions it is said that this number was exceeded.

On the whole, it would appear that this plan of church extension, so novel among the Highlanders, was found to answer well. There was only one person whom it did not altogether please. The letters of Sir James Riddell are those of a kind-hearted and friendly landlord, strongly prejudiced against the Free Church; but when he came from the Continent and saw what was going on, it was not to his mind. In an interview with Dr. Beith, of Stirling,† one of the officiating ministers, he expressed a wish to have the iron vessel brought in close to the shore, and made fast, so as to be more convenient for the people. Dr. Beith, while willing to consider the proposal, suggested that, in agreeing to this, he was really yielding the whole principle, and might as well give a site at once. For that, however, the time had not yet come.

Before going further, it may be right to speak of the reasons which induced these landlords in so many cases to act so unlike themselves. Their letters of refusal in some instances found their way to the newspapers, but it would hardly be fair to quote statements evidently written in haste under the excitement of keen feeling. Their case appears to most advantage as presented by Sir James Graham and their other friends in the Committee on Sites.

* Report on Sites, ii. p. 85, q. 3263. † *Ibid.* iii. p. 93, q. 5923.

One allegation was that the Free Church had no real grounds to stand on; that the Disruption was caused by some obscure ecclesiastical opinion of no practical moment, and that the people should just go back to the Establishment. To this the answer was obvious, that, in the opinion of the Free Church, the question was one of vital moment. Ministers gave up their livings on account of it, laymen perilled, and often lost, their situations, and what right had landlords to judge other men's consciences in regard to the importance of their religious principles? It was clear also, even on the showing of their opponents, that the difference was important. Sir James Graham and other statesmen, instead of yielding the point at issue, resolved on account of it to allow the Church to be broken up and her ministers and people to be driven out. After proving in this way their sense of its importance, it was strange to have them turning round and attempting to speak of it as a thing of trifling moment.

A second objection was the avowed hostility of the Free Church to the Establishment. This was much dwelt on. Dr. Chalmers denied all hostility, except that of fair argument. Dr. Makellar avowed that if we could lead all the people of Scotland to right apprehensions of what we considered to be the truth of God, we should certainly do so.* But this, some of the Committee insisted, would be to subvert the Established Church. The point was pressed by question after question, till one of the English members, Mr. Baines,† of Leeds, seems to have lost patience, and asked whether there were any religious body who did not think it their duty by fair means to draw converts to their side. As to the hostility of the Free Church, Dr. Gordon said‡: "I do not know very well what is meant by the term hostile. If it is for a Church to propagate its own views of Divine truth, then every conscientious Church must be hostile to every other. But I would not be disposed to use the term hostility in that case. It is no more than an honest man's duty to extend what he believes to be the truth of God."

A third point much urged was the severity of the language used by Free Churchmen. As to this, it was frankly admitted

* Report on Sites, i. p. 59, q. 891. † *Ibid.* p. 60, q. 905.
‡ *Ibid.* p. 69, q. 1042.

that the oppression which makes even a wise man mad had in some cases called forth language which could not be defended. In the heat of debate there had been a good deal of this on both sides; and it was not a pleasant thing when the worst sayings of each were set in array before the Committee, and English gentlemen were asked to judge whether the Establishment had succeeded in saying the hardest things against the Free Church, or the Free Church against the Establishment. It turned out that some of the harshest sayings imputed to Free Churchmen owed much of their offensiveness to the garbled form in which they had been quoted. The truth, however, was well put by Dr. Chalmers:—"I will not justify hard sayings. . . . Those hard sayings were all very natural, as far as I understand, but not justifiable." He reminded the Committee, however, that there was a great difference between the *random sayings* of those who suffer wrong, and the *deliberate doings* of those who inflict the wrong.*

But, after all, even if the offensive language had been worse than it was, where was the justice of making the punishment fall on the inhabitants of distant country parishes, who were in this respect wholly blameless? If some newspaper article was unduly severe, why should the shepherds of Strathspey have to suffer for it, while the editor went free. If some too fervid speaker had let his eloquence run riot at Edinburgh or Glasgow, was that a reason why the congregations in Skye should have to sit and be snowed upon while worshipping in the open air? The cruelty of this was referred to by Dr. Candlish at the Inverness Assembly of 1845, in terms which show how keenly the injustice was felt.

Passing from these general statements, however, we must now refer to certain cases which occurred in the south of Scotland, and which unhappily became only too prominent in public view.

Canonbie is a rural parish in Dumfriesshire,† lying along the English border. The whole land belongs to the Duke of Buccleuch, who is known in Scotland as one of the most fair-minded

* Report on Sites, iii. p. 120, q. 6349; p. 143, q. 6477.

† *Ibid.* i. p. 39, q. 541 *seq.*

and kindest of proprietors. With few exceptions, the inhabitants were in his Grace's employment as tenants-at-will or dependents. At the Disruption, the adherents of the Free Church met in the open air for public worship in front of a row of cottages. The numbers were considerable, but before applying for a site, they wished to have the congregation consolidated. A canvas tent was procured from Edinburgh; and relying on the kindly feelings of the landlord, they had it erected on the corner of a moss or moor, where the land was of little value, in the confident expectation that no offence would be taken. For three or four Sabbaths all went well but suddenly that formidable engine of law, an interdict, came from the sheriff. The tent was ordered to be removed, and the people, as they believed, were prohibited from meeting on any part of the Duke's lands.

At first sight it appeared as if this must be fatal. A solitary case had at last occurred in which the Free Church must be overborne. There was no friendly sea-shore where they might meet between tide-marks, and the far-reaching Buccleuch estates stretching on either hand left them no hope of taking refuge on any neighbouring property. There was just one resource left—the open grassy side of the public road where the people might meet to worship God. No tent could be used as it would have been illegal to dig holes on the roadside for the necessary supports. All that could be done was to select a spot near some trees which on stormy days might serve partially to break the force of the blast.

In these circumstances the congregation met from Sabbath to Sabbath, comprising not only the day-labourers and the smaller tenants, but some of the leading farmers in the district. At the approach of the first winter, a petition was got up asking for a site. It was signed by 1083 persons, and, to their credit be it said, fully the half of the names were those of persons belonging to the Established Church, who were anxious to see such a public grievance removed. The petition was duly sent, but, to the surprise of many, the receipt of it was not even acknowledged.*

How the months of winter were got through we shall see;

* Report on Sites, i. p. 41, q. 585.

but during the following summer an incident took place which was not without effect. In the month of July a rumour spread through the parish that the Rev. Dr. Gordon, of the High Church, Edinburgh, himself a Dumfriesshire man, who stood in the foremost rank of Scotland's most honoured clergymen, was coming to dispense the Lord's Supper to that outcast congregation on the wayside. He was to be accompanied by three devoted elders, landed proprietors of high social position, Mr. Claud Alexander of Ballochmyle; Mr. Howieson Crawfurd of Crawfurdland; and Mr. Adam Rolland of Gask, who were to be joined in the services of the communion by Sir Patrick Maxwell of Springkell, an extensive Dumfriesshire landlord. The situation was becoming serious. It would hardly do to treat this intelligence as the Canonbie petition had been treated. The factor of the Duke appeared on the scene to say that his Grace could not bear to think "that so holy an office should be desecrated by being unnecessarily celebrated by the side of the public highway." The use of a field was offered for the purpose; and, under the superintendence of the factor, the place was fixed on, a gravel-pit was cleared out and levelled, the tent was erected, and all was made ready.

When Sabbath morning came, and Dr. Gordon and his friends arrived on the ground, they found an audience assembled of at least a thousand hearers, who had come from all the surrounding parishes. It was vain to think of using a tent. Out on the open field, under the canopy of heaven, the communion tables were spread. The day was bright and pleasant; the services peculiarly solemn and memorable to many for the deep impression which was made, and the spiritual benefits which were received.

A great point had now been gained. Under the sanction of the factor, the tent had been pitched at the gravel-pit. Thankfully the people, in an address which they sent to the Duke, acknowledged his kindness, and were assured in reply, that as a temporary arrangement the tent might be allowed to stand, but no site must be expected to be given on his lands. The congregation must disperse.

It is touching to see the gratitude of the people for such a

concession; and some readers may be ready to think that it was quite as great as the occasion called for. But during the previous winter there had been trials and hardships severe enough to make them sincerely thankful for even such a favour. The Rev. Peter Hope, afterwards settled at Wamphray, brings their trials strikingly before us.

"After the struggle between the Duke and the Free Church was fairly begun, I preached my first sermon in Canonbie as a probationer appointed to the post by the Free Church. It was on the 19th of November that I first addressed the houseless and shivering congregation. I had preached the year before in the parish church, where everything was comfortable. But how different were the circumstances in which I now proclaimed the Word of God! It was indeed sad to see old men and women and little children standing exposed on the open road to the wind and rain in this Christian land, and near the middle of the nineteenth century, listening to no political harangue, but simply to the Gospel of Christ; and all because of their having been driven from a barren moor, where the wandering gipsies are made welcome to pitch their tents, and dwell for weeks together. During the winter we met Sabbath after Sabbath, the length of the service being determined by the state of the weather. The firmness and steadiness of the congregation were truly admirable.

"The last Sabbath of February was the stormiest of the winter. I had arranged to exchange services with the Rev. Mr. Ross, afterwards settled at Langholm, and early in the morning I rode through the blinding drift of snow to that town, in order to fulfil my engagement; but on arriving there it was found impossible for Mr. Ross to go to Canonbie, owing to the tremendous boisterousness of the weather. With great difficulty I rode back through wind and snow to our usual place of meeting, and found actually between thirty and forty people assembled. I conducted a short service, and sent them home. It was certainly an impressive and solemn sight, that little company of worshippers, their plaids and clothes all white with snow, standing on the highway, listening to the injunction to have the same mind in them which was also in Christ; to

render to no man evil for evil, but to overcome evil with good.

"During the month of March, Mr. Guthrie preached at Canonbie. The day was wet, windy, and cold. During the interval between the services, and during almost the whole of the afternoon services, the rain fell in torrents. But it did not prevent a congregation of between five and six hundred people assembling to hear the striking and impassioned preacher. He was himself deeply impressed with the scene; and he will be sure to give the world a vivid picture of what he saw. I had a good deal of intercourse with Mr. Guthrie during his short visit, and was highly pleased with his curious and fervid conversation. He is a man not merely to dazzle and delight by his free and happy fancy, and bold and moving eloquence, but he can also guide by his sagacious counsel, and draw every one to his side by his frank and gladsome spirit, and by the kindliness of his heart." *

How vivid was the impression of this scene on his mind the following description, in a letter written at the time, will show. On the previous day, he had reached Langholm, where he stayed over night, and next morning, he says:—"Well wrapped up, I drove out to Canonbie—the hills white with snow—the roads covered ankle deep in many places with slush, the wind high and cold, thick rain lashing on, and the Esk by our side all the way roaring in the snow-flood between bank and brae. We passed Johnnie Armstrong's Tower, yet strong even in its ruins, and after a drive of four miles, a turn of the road brought me in view of a sight which was overpowering, and would have brought the salt tear into the eyes of any man of common humanity. . . . [The person who drove me, when we came in sight of that congregation, burst into tears, and asked me, 'Was there ever sight seen like that?'] . . . There, under the naked boughs of some spreading oak trees, at the point where a county road joined the turnpike, stood a tent [pulpit], around, or, rather, in front of which was gathered a large group of muffled men and women, with some little children—a few sitting, most of them standing, and some old venerable

* Memoir of Rev. P. Hope, by Rev. J. Dodds, p. 33.

widows cowering under the scanty shelter of an umbrella. On all sides, each road was adding a stream of plaided men and muffled women to the group, till the congregation had increased to between 500 and 600, gathering on the very road, and waiting my forthcoming from a mean inn where I found shelter till the hour of worship had come. During the psalm singing and first prayer, I was in the tent, but finding that I would be uncomfortably confined, I took up my position on a chair in front, having my hat on my head, my Codrington close-buttoned up to my throat, and a pair of boots, which were wet through with rain ere the service was over. The rain lashed on heavily during the latter part of the sermon, but none budged; and when my hat was off during the last prayer, some man kindly extended an umbrella over my head. I was so interested, and so were the people, that our forenoon service continued for about two hours. At the close, I felt so much for the people, it was such a sad sight to see old men and women, some children, and one or two people pale and sickly, and apparently near the grave, all wet and benumbed with the keen wind and cold rain, that I proposed to have no afternoon service, but this met with universal dissent. . . . So we met again at three o'clock, and it poured on almost without intermission during the whole service; and that over, shaken cordially by many a man and woman's hand, I got into the gig and drove here [Langholm] in time for an evening service, followed, through rain from heaven and wet snow on the road, by a number of the people. I hope that the Lord will bless the words, and, with spiritual grace, make up to the people for their bodily sufferings."*

When such trials were made public, they naturally awakened considerable feeling, and ministers from a distance came to show their sympathy with the people, especially when the Lord's Supper was dispensed. One of the venerated fathers of the Church, Dr. Makellar, speaks of his experience on two of these occasions.† In July, 1845, the year following the visit of Dr. Gordon, the tent again proved to be too small, and the communion table was spread outside on the grass. The morning was fine, but rain came on during service, which exceedingly incommoded the

* Report on Sites, i. p. 71, q. 1092. † *Ibid.* i. p. 56, q. 844 *seq.*

people; and, he states, "injured what we call the communion elements." But in 1846, when they once more had to meet in the open air, things were more trying. "The early part of the day was one of the finest I ever witnessed. About the middle of the service, clouds began to collect, thunder and lightning came on, forming altogether a storm, the most tremendous I ever witnessed." Dr. Makellar adds that, in the midst of this scene, the administration of the Lord's Supper was proceeded with quietly and calmly, about a thousand people being present.

As time went on, it became a question what was to be done, the tent being held by a tenure so precarious. The congregation, however, instead of dispersing, went on increasing in numbers and determination. "The canvas tent," an eye-witness writes,* "found shelter from the violence of the winter storms in an old gravel-pit in the valley, under the shadow of one of Canonbie's thousand oaks—meet emblems of her sturdy sons. When the Free Church proceedings began, many came from motives of curiosity to hear, and, blessed be God, the word came in power to some of their hearts. The first-fruits of the Free Church in Canonbie have been 'the swearer forgetting his oath, and the drunkard forsaking his haunts.' I have heard instances of this which would, perhaps, call tears to the eyes of some of your readers."

In these circumstances, the Church resolved to do what every Church deserving of the name would have done. They disregarded the precariousness of the tenure. The General Assembly formed the people into a regularly constituted congregation. Taking all risks, they called a minister, who was duly settled. A kirk-session was ordained, the ecclesiastical arrangements were all complete, and they calmly awaited the time when a site would be given.

More striking, perhaps, than even Canonbie was another case in the northern division of Dumfriesshire, where it borders on the county of Lanark.

Wanlockhead,† one of the most remarkable villages in Scot-

* *Witness* newspaper, 5th February, 1845.

† The facts here given in this account of Wanlockhead are all taken either from the Report on Sites or from the Disruption Mss. xix. and lxviii.

land, consists of scattered rows of thatched cottages, built some 1500 feet above the sea among "a wilderness of mountains," at the highest elevation on which it is believed any village stands in Britain. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, a German of the name of Cornelius Hardskins, coming to the place in search of gold, discovered those lead mines which ever since have proved "the most productive in the kingdom." The place is bleak and inhospitable, "where one might hardly expect to find a shepherd's hut;" but homes were required for the miners, and thus the village was built, which in 1843 contained rather more than 800 inhabitants.

In this remote locality the people had developed to an extraordinary degree the best national characteristics of Scotchmen. Dr. Richardson, the traveller, whose works were at one time in high repute, compares the Wanlockhead mountains to some of the mountainous districts of Palestine, but speaks of the remarkable difference of the inhabitants — the thieving, ignorant Orientals as contrasted with the men of Wanlockhead, an honest, industrious population, where "the conversation of the commonest people will often delight and surprise the man of letters." The estimate of Dr. Chalmers was not less emphatic: "These miners were the finest specimen of the Scottish peasantry he had ever seen."

Blessings often come to us in disguise. The unhealthy occupation of lead-mining prevented the men working more than six hours a-day; and, happily, the leisure thus obtained was turned to good account. About the year 1756 they established a subscription library for their amusement and edification; the ordinances of religion were regularly observed; and they have maintained "a high character for intelligence, sobriety, and morality," enjoying their excellent library, and exhibiting "a zeal in the acquisition of useful knowledge which is truly astonishing." Few persons, Mr. Hastings adds, leave their native place without desiring to get back. The people live in great comfort, peace, and happiness.

In such a community, as might have been expected, the Ten Years' Conflict was eagerly watched. Pamphlets and newspapers were read and canvassed with keen intelligence; and

when the crisis came they were ready. Three-fourths of the people, along with their minister, Mr. Hastings, at once joined the Free Church, and brought on themselves a series of trials of which they had little idea.

The mines and surrounding lands belonged to the Duke of Buccleuch; the miners were his workmen: but the kindly treatment which they had invariably received at his hands made them confident that none of his dependents would be subjected to personal hardship because of their religious opinions.

In July, 1843, the first petition was sent respectfully applying for a site; but, as in the case of Canonbie, the receipt of it was not acknowledged.*

Six weeks afterwards, they again appealed in more urgent terms. They are his Grace's workmen and dependents, they say; they are much attached to his interests and to his person; and they express a hope that he will grant what they so greatly need. This time the factor writes that the request is refused.†

Winter came, and amidst the storms of January the outgoing minister makes a personal appeal for the use of a schoolroom standing empty. Again the factor writes that the request is declined.‡

In July, 1844, the Presbytery addressed the Duke in urgent terms, asking for some concession before the people are overtaken by the storms of a second winter. "May the Lord God of our fathers, who has been pleased to make you the steward of so large a portion of this earth, incline your heart to grant the request!" Once more there came, through the factor, a simple refusal.§

Then the people resolved on yet another attempt. The Duke had come to their neighbourhood—was staying at Drumlanrig, the grand old castle of the Queensberry family; and if only they could get a personal interview¶ they were confident he would not refuse them. For the time, however, this led to no favourable result. Last of all, Dr. Chalmers made an attempt. In former days he had received convincing proof of the Duke's

* Report on Sites, ii. p. 139. † *Ibid.* p. 140.
‡ *Ibid.* § *Ibid.* p. 141. ¶ *Ibid.* p. 142.

kindness and confidence; and he resolved to use whatever influence he had, on behalf of the people. The receipt of his letter was never even acknowledged.*

All this was so utterly unlike the Duke's usual mode of acting that it was obvious some false or exaggerated information† must have reached him from those who were hostile to the Free Church. It almost seemed as if he had yielded to the suggestions of some who wished to try the experiment whether a Free Church congregation could be driven back into the Establishment. The circumstances, it must be confessed, were favourable. Up among these wild hills, 1500 feet above the sea, the wind even in summer blows chill and keen, while in winter, as one of the witnesses states, it has occasionally been found impossible for a human being to stand for an hour exposed in the open air.‡ The plan, therefore, was a simple one: deny the people ground on which to build; let the minister get no site for a manse; and that terrible climate will do the rest. The people must go back to the pews they have left, and the Free Church would be driven from the glen.

If men reasoned thus, they should have known their countrymen better. Two miles beyond the head of the valley in which the village stands, lies the Pass of Enterkin, with its memories of the time when the shepherds of these hills rose for the rescue of their covenanting brethren, and met and overthrew the dragoons of Claverhouse. Not far off over the mountains was the battlefield of Airs Moss, where Cameron laid down his life; and under the thatched roofs of Wanlockhead, there still lived a race of humble, intelligent, God-fearing men, ready, if called on, to let the world see that the national manhood of Scotland, and the earnest spiritual life of former generations, were not yet dead. The bearing of the people was indeed calm and respectful. Even when matters were at the worst, visitors who went among them testified that not an angry word could be heard. That, however, is only another national characteristic. When the best

* Report, i. p. 94.

† Report on Sites, i. p. 55, 56, qq. 818, 829.

‡ *Ibid.* i. p. 54, q. 769.

class of the Scottish people are most determined, they are often most calm; and when that is their mood, the very last thing to be expected is that they will submit to have their conscientious convictions overborne.

To these poor miners it had become plain at last that all appeals to the forbearance and kindness of their landlord were in vain, and preparations were made for the coming struggle. Mr. Hastings, their minister, had broken up his home, and sent his wife and family to Dumfries—a distance of thirty miles. For himself he found accommodation in a workman's thatched cottage, where the widow of one of the miners gave him the use of a single room, low in the roof, ten feet square, as stated in evidence,* and this was the minister's sitting-room, bedroom, and study, all in one. "A miserably small place," Dr. Guthrie says after visiting it; and there Mr. Hastings prepared to face pastoral work such as has seldom if ever been known in Scotland.

The conducting of Sabbath services was the great difficulty. Sometimes the congregation met on the bare hillside, sometimes in one of the valleys, changing the locality so as to escape as far as possible the fury of the blast, though no change could free them from the cold benumbing wind, and the frequent showers of rain and snow.†

Mr. Graham Spiers tells of a day when he was present in the beginning of March, 1846. Dr. Candlish preached in the small ravine near the village. "The wooden erection which served for a pulpit was placed in the bottom of the hollow, and the people sat most of them on stones upon the side of the hill, and some of them round the minister on chairs which they had brought." It was a very wet and boisterous day. "The service lasted about

* The height is 6 feet 8 inches. Mr. Hastings was inclined to make the best of his "wee room." He "often spoke of its comfort." He considered it indeed a most favourable circumstance that he was able to obtain even such a lodging. It enabled him to remain. That his health suffered, however, cannot be doubted. While preaching in the open air, "the exposure to the brightness of the sun," he says, "has injured my eyes." Perhaps the confined room had also something to do with it.

† See note at p. 414, *ante*.

OPEN-AIR WORSHIP AT WANLOCKHEAD.

an hour and three-quarters. I was quite wet through, and I suppose every other person must have been the same." *

During the following month Dr. Guthrie was in Dumfries on his celebrated manse-building tour, and went to show his sympathy. He was struck with the appearance of the place —a very high, stormy, inhospitable locality.† "I preached on the open hill, down in a sort of hollow, and the people were ranged on the side of the mountain. It was a swampy place, and I wished to have some protection between my feet and the wet ground. I saw some fine planks of wood lying close by, and I wondered why the people did not take them and use them. In place of that they went to a house and brought an old door. After service, they said that the planks belonged to the Duke of Buccleuch, and they would not touch them in case any offence should be taken. The people were standing on the wet grass, and there were showers lashing on occasionally during service — what they call hill showers — and they were exposed to the storm and rain."

The Rev. P. Borrowman, minister of Glencairn, in the same Presbytery, had much to do in strengthening the hands of Mr. Hastings and his people. Often in summer he has preached to them in the open air, and has seen them "wet through." When winter came with frost and snow, the cold caused extreme suffering. He has felt so benumbed that at the close of the service he could not get off the stone on which he was standing till he was helped down. ‡ This was not due to any unusual degree of cold. The congregation had often to encounter such weather.

For two winters these trials were patiently borne, but when a third season was approaching an attempt was made to mitigate the evil. A canvas tent was got from Edinburgh, in the hope that it might give some relief, but the climate soon proved too much for it. Mr. James Weir, who acted as precentor at the time, narrates the circumstances of the experiment:—"The tent, though it lasted only a few months, had an eventful history,

* Report on Sites, i. pp. 7, 8, qq. 105-123.
† *Ibid.* p. 72, q. 1094 *seq.*
‡ *Ibid.* ii. p. 3, qq. 1377-1391.

during which the young men of the congregation acquired considerable experience in handling canvas. On Saturday, the 27th December, 1845, the day after it arrived, the office-bearers and a good many of the congregation assembled for its erection; but before it was up heavy rain came on, completely drenching us, and afterwards the wind rose, and the tent was levelled to the ground by eleven o'clock that night. Next day was frosty, and the ground was white with snow. Mr. Borrowman, of Glencairn, standing on the top of an old dyke, preached to a congregation of two hundred. We next erected the tent in the somewhat sheltered kailyard of one of our number; but on the first very stormy Sabbath, the 21st February, 1846, some of us had to go out and tighten the ropes during the sermon, as the canvas was coming and going, and flapping so much about the minister's ears that he could not get on. In the course of a few months the canvas was so torn by the wind that no tightening of the ropes would do any good, and we were again unsheltered."*

Without shelter, however, it was impossible to face the rigorous severities of winter, and new arrangements had to be made. The congregation was divided into sections, five of the most commodious cottages were fixed on as places of meeting, each having a certain number of the hearers assigned to it, and in these the Sabbath services were held, the minister going from cottage to cottage, till the whole congregation were gone over. This continued for a time; but six services of an hour and a-half each were too much for human strength, and the number was diminished, the object, however, being still kept in view of securing for the people the benefits of public worship. The neighbouring ministers came to the aid of Mr. Hastings. "We felt," Mr. Borrowman states, "that he was exposed to harder work than the rest of us, and we used to take it in turn to assist him." †

Thus the years passed on, and while Mr. Hastings was wearing himself out, the people not only remained unshaken in their attachment to the Free Church, but the trials seemed to have brought a blessing, and their spiritual earnestness was growing deeper. Little was said of their trials: when the

* Disr. Mss. lxviii. † Report on Sites, ii. p. 3, q. 1386.

weather would at all admit of it, they met in the open air. "I have seldom," says Mr. Hastings, "referred to our peculiar circumstances except that, when the rain was pouring down on us in torrents, I may have prayed that the Lord would open the Duke's heart to relieve us from the great difficulties of our position. Many times my heart failed me, and my utterance was choked, to witness the patient endurance of the people. . . . Even last Sabbath, when our Communion was celebrated, both minister and elders were nearly drenched during the solemn services." *

But while at Wanlockhead itself, they showed such calmness and resignation, yet, when the facts were made known through the country, much painful feeling began to arise. "One does not like to trust himself to speak of them," said Dr. Candlish. "Such instances of patient suffering excite feelings in reference to those whom we desire to reverence as occupying the higher grades of society, which we are anxious, for their sakes and for ourselves, to repress." Indignant utterances, however, sometimes came from other quarters. A few lines from a short poem, published anonymously at the time, may serve to show the state of feeling which was beginning to prevail :—

"I heard, on the side of a lonely hill,
The Free Kirk preacher's wrestling prayer ;
Blue mist, brown muir, and a tinkling rill,
God's only house and music there.
And aged men, in mauds of gray,
Bare-headed stood to hear and pray.
* * * * *
Is it to pomp and splendour given
Alone to reach the throne on high?
The hill-side prayer may come to heaven
From plaided breast and up-cast eye.
* * * * *
The storm is out, the wind is up,
God's Israel sit in mire and clay ;
Rain-drenched we take the sacred cup,
Shivering with cold we turn to pray."
* * * * *

The whole situation, in short, was getting painful to con-

* *Witness*, 16th August, 1845, quoted by Mr. Duncan.

template. The struggle was between worldly wealth and power on the one side, and patience and faith on the other. The Duke has determined that no Free Church shall be allowed; the people have determined that to the Free Church they must and shall adhere. Through the exposure of summer and the storms of winter, the struggle went on; and the question arose, how long was this to last? Would the country look on and see these humble workmen overborne? or would the Duke do justice to his own better feelings, and allow his dependents to follow their sense of religious duty in the worship of God?

At last some concession was made. They were looking with dismay to the approach of the sixth winter, when a Free Church minister, who had some connection with the district, unexpectedly came to the rescue. The Rev. Lewis Irving, of Falkirk, wrote the Duke, saying that he felt a personal interest in Wanlockhead, from having, in his youth, lived much in that neighbourhood with his uncle, Lord Newton. He asked permission to put up a wooden erection, which might give some shelter from the storms of the coming winter; representing that this might be allowed, while the question of a permanent site was left in abeyance.

Of this letter no notice was taken, but, assuming that silence *might* mean consent, Mr. Irving went forward and put the matter to the proof. Subscriptions were raised, wood was bought and prepared in Edinburgh. Along with a band of workmen, it was forwarded by railway to Abington, carted over the hills, and the work was at once commenced. For about a week no opposition was offered; but just as the side walls were finished, the manager of the mines took alarm at the responsibility he was incurring, and the proceedings were stopped. Meantime Mr. Irving was on his way to preach the opening sermon on the second Sabbath of October, and, notwithstanding the arrest which had been laid on the work, he went on with the service, the congregation being glad to find themselves under the protection of the side walls and within the roofless shelter.

Then another favourable symptom appeared. A well-known Edinburgh lawyer, the Duke's agent, wrote to suggest that the

people should send in another petition. It might have been thought that they had been suppliants often enough, but they were in no mood to hesitate. An earnest application was made by the elders and people, and in due time permission was given to roof in the Wooden Church, the agent, at the same time, in name of the Duke, expressing his regret that any misunderstanding or disagreement should have occurred, and ascribing it to the interference of others. The wooden erection accordingly was finished, and on Sabbath, the 10th of December, the congregation sat down to the Lord's Supper, with a wooden cover to shelter them from the inclemency of the climate.

In all this there is one point on which justice must be done to the honourable conduct of the Duke of Buccleuch. In other parts of the country, we have seen how the adherents of the Free Church lost their situations, and were deprived of their means of support; but, in this respect, his Grace acted as became his well-known character. At the collieries of Canonbie and the mines of Wanlockhead, all the workmen were in his employment, but not even when the controversy was at the hottest was any one interfered with for his religious opinions. Many of those who held the most responsible situations were leading members of the Free Church, but, except in the matter of granting a site, the treatment which they received at the hands of the Duke was uniformly fair and kind,* and the time ultimately came when sites for church and manse were given.

Having now seen the hardships to which so many congregations were subjected, one is led naturally to ask what effect this exposure had on the health of the people. When Dr. Guthrie described to the Committee his preaching at Wanlockhead in the open air, amidst the piercing winds and cold showers of April, they asked him whether that would be injurious to health, and he replied, '*more Scottico*'—"how could it be otherwise?"† When Mr. MacLeod told them of his addressing the people at Uig amidst that heavy snowfall already referred to, a member of the Committee asked, with much *naïveté*, Did he think it desirable for the health of the people that a church should be erected? And yet there appears little desire on the

* Report on Sites, i. qq. 706-712. † *Ibid.* i. p. 73, q. 1107.

part of the hearers to make much of their hardships. On the day when Mr. Shepherd, of Kingussie, preached at Duthil, we saw how pulpit, precentor's desk, and seats had to be cleared of snow before the service could go on. Mr. MacGregor, one of the audience present on a similar occasion, must have had a good, strong Highland constitution. When asked by the Committee whether his health had suffered, "I can hardly say," he replied, "that I suffered, but I was that cold that I could hardly stand." There were others, however, who were not equally fortunate on such occasions. A medical man in Argyllshire, Dr. Aldcorn, of Oban, was well acquainted with the surrounding districts. While visiting among his patients in Strontian and Torosay, he had met with cases where the people ascribed their illness to worshipping in the open air during inclement weather. "I myself caught one of the most sudden and severe illnesses I ever had in my life from attending public worship in the open air in Strontian on a cold evening, and several other persons were taken ill the day after." *

Similar testimony is borne by Dr. Orchard, a medical practitioner in Grantown, Strathspey. In the course of his practice he had met with many cases (at least fifty) in which, as a medical man, he ascribed their illnesses to exposure to the inclemency of the weather at open-air meetings. They suffered, and in some cases died, of various diseases—bronchitis, inflammation, rheumatism, spitting of blood, and similar ailments.†

Sometimes the trial fell heavily on the minister. "What did they think," Mr. Carment of Rosskeen asked in the General Assembly, "of an old man like him having to preach the Gospel amidst rain, and hail, and snow, exposed to the pelting of the storm and the winter blast, as he had often been?" But there were some of the younger ministers who suffered even more severely. "I have a painful recollection," Dr. Elder states of one case in Argyllshire, "where I addressed a large congregation on a stormy evening under a canvas tent, erected because of difficulties in procuring a site. The minister of the parish had remained in, and we had planted a young minister there on the call of the people, who, after prosecuting his work

* Report on Sites, iii. q. 4987. † *Ibid.* iii. p. 82, q. 5743 *seq.*

for a short time with great zeal, and under great difficulties, fell into bad health and died, the result unquestionably of his exposure in that tent to the storms of winter, and of the other discomforts to which he was subjected." *

In the same way the young minister of Canonbie was cut down.† At the time he was inducted the only church was that poor canvas tent, standing on sufferance, and affording but slight protection at the best. When examined before the Committee, he told how in winter he had seen the rain freely percolating through the canvas, and falling on the heads of the worshippers. "I often saw the seats thoroughly wet, as if they had been dragged through the river. I saw the floor often a puddle of mud." ‡

The remarkable thing was that, in the face of this, the congregation went on increasing. In 1843 Dr. Gordon dispensed the communion to 120 members; in 1847 Mr. Innes computed the congregation, including the children, from 500 to 600 persons. But though the people were able to endure such hardships, they were too much for the young pastor. It was not long till symptoms of consumption appeared. The disease rapidly ran its course, and he sank into an early grave.

It was computed that the Free Church population subjected to these hardships by the refusal of sites amounted to about 16,000 persons. "I state it as a fact," Mr. Graham Spiers said, "respecting which there can be no dispute, that in more than one of these congregations members have been hurried to a premature grave by their exposure to the weather." § They were in many cases the excellent of the earth, who, in faithful adherence to what they held to be the truth of God, laid down their lives.

Meantime we have seen the patience with which all this was endured by the people. The question at issue was one on which their feelings were keenly excited. They saw their neighbours and friends, through the effect of site-refusing, laid on a sick-bed or carried to the grave; but though they felt the wrong they were orderly and law-abiding, and they bore it in

* Disr. Mss. lxxi. p. 14.
† Report on Sites, i. 87, q. 1287 *seq.*
‡ *Ibid.*
§ Blue Book, 1847, p. 232.

patience, waiting for better times. Only in one locality—as if it required an exception to prove the rule—was there a slight outbreak.

In the parish of Resolis, near Cromarty, a minister was about to be settled as successor to Mr. Sage, who had "gone out." Almost the whole parishioners having joined the Free Church, the presentee was to "get the cure of souls with hardly a soul to cure," and would have nothing to do but consume the living which the State had provided for the good of the people. Besides, as Mr. Macculloch states, there was not in the parish a single proprietor who was not a site-refuser, the respectful petitions of the people having been rejected, and in some cases "the petitioners themselves repulsed with contumely and scorn."

Unfortunately, some of the younger men resolved to take their own way of opposing the settlement of "the Intrusionist from Sutherlandshire," and when the clergymen and heritors met at the church, they found a band of lads with some women prepared to resist their entrance. The authorities, however, had got previous warning, and a detachment of soldiers had been marched over from Fort George. Mr. Macculloch remembers "well to this hour (1877) the sensation caused by the sight of the red-coats, and the sound of their measured tread as they passed down the quiet street of a small town which lay in their line of march, with their commanding officer at their head."

Arrived at the church, they found a mob prepared to bar all access. There were cries of defiance, and some stones were thrown, certain obnoxious "moderate lairds" receiving more than their own share of attention. The order was then given to fire, which was done with blank cartridge—the only effect being to exasperate the people. In the midst of the turmoil, the reverend "presentee whom they came to induct was the first—as was reported in the newspapers of the day—to call on the military to do their duty, and load with ball. This was accordingly done, but whether the shots were purposely fired in the air, as we shall charitably hope, or only missed their aim, the result was that nobody was either killed or seriously wounded." Of course, the people had to give way, and the presentee was installed; but

his word that day procured for him a sobriquet which stuck to him; through the whole district he was popularly known as the "Rev. Ball-cartridge." *

The crowd, however, at the church door lost some of their number. Among others a woman, guilty of "cheering on the mob," was captured, and carried to Cromarty in a gig, and there lodged in jail. "That evening a party of Resolis men entered the town of Cromarty, marched through the streets, and halted in front of the jail. They had come, they said, to bail out the woman. They remained for two full hours urging on the authorities to accept their bail, and release the woman. Finding that their bail was not to be accepted, they rushed upon the prison, broke in the doors, set the woman free, and bore her back in triumph to Resolis. A detachment of them, in investing the jail, had to make their way through the flower-garden of a lady in the neighbourhood. She was looking at them in extreme anxiety, well aware of the mischief into which they were running themselves; but mistaking the cause of her anxiety, they imagined that she was merely alarmed for her flowers. "Ah! lady," they said, as they carefully threaded the narrow walks, "dinna be feart for the floors; we winna tramp ane o' them;" and they kept their word. Such were the Ross-shire rioters. Surely never were more gentle-hearted men forced into collision with the law." †

* Disr. Mss. lxxx. p. 5. † Life of Dr. Cunningham, p. 193.

XXXII. Friends.

From the difficulties and trials thus far described we gladly turn to the friends who came to the help of the Church in her time of need. Among the leading Scottish Churchmen of that day, there were many zealous supporters of evangelical religion, and, for the most part, they joined the Free Church in 1843, while among the humbler classes there were thousands to whom, in their own sphere, the cause was not less deeply indebted. To many of these we have already referred; but in the Disruption Mss. there are additional instances, some of which may here be given.

It was among the handloom operative weavers of Kilsyth, for example, that Dr. Burns found many of his most efficient supporters. "Some ministers shrink from weavers as Radical or opinionative. Among the best friends and upholders of the hands of the minister here have been the men of this class. They are the most pious and best informed. . . . Well-read, sober, and regular in waiting on ordinances, they take an intelligent and lively interest in the concerns of our Church." *

At Flisk, Mr. Taylor expresses a similar estimate of the farm-overseers or foremen:—"These men are placed above their fellow-servants, being esteemed trustworthy, receiving their masters' orders and seeing them executed. A better income is connected with their office. They are the best representatives of what the Scottish peasantry once were. Out of this class we have received many of our best adherents among the agricultural population." "They are the most intelligent and best instructed in matters of religion." †

Thus it was all over Scotland. Among multitudes of the

* Disr. Mss. xxix. pp. 19 *seq.* † *Ibid.* xxxvii.[2] p. 13.

common people there was a spirit of intelligence abroad, and of determination which would shrink from no difficulties, sometimes showing itself in stern endurance, as among the miners of Wanlockhead, but more frequently in their self-sacrificing contributions. "It was wonderful," says Dr. Elder, "how the Lord opened the hearts and hands of our people. One servant-girl, a member of my congregation, gave £5 to the Building Fund, and subscribed £2 a-year to the Sustentation Fund."* Such examples it is needless to multiply. There was hardly a parish in all the land where the common people did not signalise their devotedness by acts of self-denial and sacrifice which well deserve to be held in remembrance.

One striking circumstance was the way in which men were raised up to meet special cases of need. Wherever difficulties arose, no matter how remote or obscure the locality, some one was sure to stand forward, round whom the people rallied as their natural leader; and it is pleasant to observe how, in after days, ministers loved to speak of the important help thus given.

In enumerating the causes of encouragement, "It would ill become me," says Mr. Taylor, "to overlook the great comfort and assistance Mr. Thomas Morton, farmer, East Flisk, and the only elder in the parish, has been to me. He was forward in planning and executing all that our altered circumstances had rendered necessary, sparing neither time nor pains."†

At Braemar, "It was the complaint of the parish minister that the flower of the congregation had left the Establishment. . . . There were some, too, among our followers whose experience and influence were of great service to us, particularly Charles Cumming, Esq., factor for the trustees of the Earl of Fife, whose adherence I cannot but regard as providential."‡ The value of such help, however, was best appreciated in those cases where the opposition was most formidable.

Lochlee is well known to the readers of Dr. Guthrie's Life as a retired parish among the Grampians, about twenty miles from Brechin. The tenants, being without leases, were at the mercy of Lord Panmure, their landlord, and were formally warned that

* Disr. Mss. lxxi. p. 11. † *Ibid.* xxxvii. p. 13.

‡ *Ibid.* lxx. p. 18.

all who joined the Free Church would be evicted at the first term. In the midst of them there lived a son of their former minister, Mr. Inglis, tenant farmer of Baillies, whose education and natural character gave him an ascendency over his neighbours; and under his leadership the people quietly took their own way, in defiance of the warning. A Mason lodge in the glen was the only place of meeting to be had; and there, in connection with the Free Church (July, 1843), one hundred and eighty communicants sat down at the Lord's Supper, including "almost all" the tenants over whose heads the threat of expulsion was hanging. Things went smoothly for a time; but at the annual meeting of the Mason lodge in November, an attempt was made to dispossess the congregation. An insidious proposal to let the place to the highest bidder having been defeated, one of the farmers who was opposed to the Free Church called out, "I will give £10 yearly rent for it for Lord Panmure;" when he was met by two or three voices at once crying out, "Is Lord Panmure to preach in it?"—a sufficiently ludicrous idea to those who knew his Lordship; and amidst the laughter which followed, the whole opposition collapsed, and the meeting-place was secured for a year.

War was now declared. Mr. Inglis was deprived of one of his farms, and in an interview with the factor was told that, unless he ceased to thwart Lord Panmure, he would be summoned out of Baillies at Whitsunday, and all the other Free Churchmen would have to go. He said something about conscience, but was "sharply told to pocket his conscience if it were opposed to Lord Panmure." * The factor ought to have known better the man with whom he was dealing.

A further step was taken. The teacher in the glen, belonging to the "Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge," was ill and dying; but instead of letting the man die in peace, they moved for his expulsion; and the sentence of dismissal arrived from Edinburgh just in time to reach his dying bed on the day of his decease.

Then came the legal summonses. Farmers were to lose their

* Mr. Inglis' brother, minister of the Free Church, Edzell, is inclined to think this must have been a slip of the tongue, hastily uttered

farms, and about eighty persons to be driven from the Glen; but they were so calm and resolute in their attitude of determination that the landlord felt it would not do. The summonses were never enforced.

The Mason lodge was next assailed. The building was to be resumed by the proprietor, and both the members of the lodge and the Free Church expelled. Foreseeing this result, Mr. Inglis erected on his farm an unusually large house for the accommodation of a shepherd, one end of which was reserved for the man and his family, while the other was fitted with seats and a temporary pulpit. In this way he evaded a threatened interdict. They could not well prevent him building a good house for his servant, nor the servant from fitting up one end of it as he pleased. Lord Panmure at last confessed that "Baillies had outgeneralled him," and gave up the contest. In that humble building the congregation met till the accession of the second Lord Panmure, the Earl of Dalhousie, brought better times, and a church and manse were provided. On the death of Mr. Inglis, in 1868, a local newspaper declared: "No such man has died in the Glen or in any of the surrounding parishes for many a long year and day. Though a resolute Free Churchman, Mr. Inglis never limited the flow of his kindness and charity to denominational channels. Ready to do good to all, he was respected and esteemed by all, . . . an admirable example of how a man should live so as to be missed when he dies." *

In the district of Kintyre, Argyllshire, the leading supporter of the Free Church was Mr. John Walker, teacher of a school under the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge. The parish of Kilcalmonell, where he taught, had at one time distinguished itself in connection with the well-known James Haldane, who, along with his brother Robert Haldane, had done so much as a zealous evangelist in Scotland. At the instance, it was believed, of the parish minister, Mr. Haldane had been arrested in Kilcalmonell, given in charge to the constables, and sent a prisoner to the county town to be tried for the crime of preaching the Gospel in the open

* Memorials of the Disruption in Edzell and Lochlee, by the Rev. R. Inglis, Edzell, pp. 53-65.

air. In 1843 a good deal of the same spirit seems to have survived among the upper classes. The use of any house or barn had been interdicted. "For two winters," says Mr. Walker, "we worshipped the God of our fathers in the graveyard of Tarbert, sitting on the graves of our forefathers with only a canvas tent for our minister." Afterwards Mr. Walker had to take his blankets to cover the tent [pulpit], putting it up every Saturday night beside the public road under the shade of a wide-spreading tree. In spite of dire opposition, he continued to give accommodation to the Free Church ministers, "so that his house came to be called the Non-Intrusion inn."

The proprietor, Mr. Campbell of Stonefield, "whose title," Mr. Walker says, "is an exponent of his heart towards the Free Church," refused a site, and, when one was got against his will, forbade the use of all his quarries. The spirit of the people, however, was roused. The old proverb about carrying coals to Newcastle received a new application—when it was found they had to bring stones to Stonefield, "a district where nineteen-twentieths of the surface is rock." It had to be done, however. Building stones were conveyed in boats from Cowal, across an arm of the sea thirteen miles wide, and under the care of Mr. Walker, and Mr. John M'Lauchlan, postmaster, the Free Church was erected.

But further troubles were in store. The Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge dismissed Mr. Walker and the other teachers who joined the Free Church. Mrs. Wallace, a poor widow, who taught the female school, "had her furniture laid out on the public road, and Mr. Dugald Sinclair, the factor, came to my house while I was in the act of removing, and told me that unless I made speedy exit he would treat my effects in the same way."

Deprived thus of his situation, Mr. Walker found employment elsewhere, and went at last across the Atlantic, where God prospered him. Writing in 1879 from his home in Canada, he says—"I have suffered much and done much for the Free Church, of which I am now glad. I have never repented it. The time of the struggle was the happiest part of my life."*

Ballantrae, Ayrshire, furnishes a favourable example of those

* Disr. Mss. lxxxiii.

cases where, amidst opposition of a milder type, friends were raised up to guide congregations in remote country districts. A former minister—Mr. Burns, afterwards of Monkton and Dunedin, New Zealand—nephew of the great Ayrshire poet, had imbued the people with the love of Gospel truth, and though his successor remained in the Establishment, they in large numbers went out, having at their head Mr. Lockhart, farmer at Laggan.

The proprietor, the Earl of Stair, refused a site; but the people got from Mr. Aitken, one of the tenants, permission to meet in Collingmill Glen, a beautiful and picturesque spot not far from the village. "Some are still alive who recall the happy solemn Sabbath services held there during the summer of 1843, and dwell with special delight on the first communion, when Mr. Burns, their former pastor, presided. The loveliness of the day, the stillness of the scene, and the solemn impressiveness of the service are held in vivid remembrance."

At the approach of winter, they retired to the school-house of Garleffin; but the great object was to get as soon as possible permanent accommodation.

"It had come to the knowledge of Mr. Lockhart that certain properties in the village—including an old inn, with stables and garden—were to be sold by private bargain. There was no time to lose. Consultation with others might be dangerous. The sale was to take place at Stranraer, seventeen miles from Ballantrae. Mr. Lockhart said nothing—rose early in the morning—reached Stranraer by business hours, and, taking all risks, purchased the property in his own name.

"Glad at heart, and grateful to God for enabling him to secure ground for the church he loved, he turned homewards, and having got about half-way, was ascending the wild romantic glen of App, when he saw approaching from the opposite direction Mr. White, an elder of the Establishment. The two elders —the Free and the Established Church—met, and, curiously eyeing each other, held a short conversation:—

"*Mr. Lockhart.* I have an idea, Mr. White, of the object of your journey, and, if I am right, you need go no further.

"*Mr. White.* How can you know my business?

"*Mr. Lockhart.* My impression is, that you are on your way

to purchase the old inn. I have bought it this morning, and mean to give it to the Free Church for a site.

"*Mr. White.* Indeed! Well, that was my object, and, as you have got before me, I will turn, and we will go home together.

"The site was found very suitable, and it was not long till one of the plain churches of those days was erected on it.

"But a manse was urgently required, and as the old inn and its garden could not give the space required, Mr. Lockhart resolved—notwithstanding the discouragement of a former refusal—to make another application to his landlord, the Earl of Stair. Waiting on his lordship, he was kindly received, stated his object, and met at once with a frank reply—'I considered a second minister at Ballantrae a manifest surplusage, and wished to prevent it; but you have got a minister and church in spite of me, and there is no use refusing you a manse—where do you wish to build?' Mr. Lockhart, doubtless, like Nehemiah of old, praying in heart to the God of heaven, said, 'The field next the old inn would suit.' It was the best site in Ballantrae, and near the church. 'You shall have it,' replied the Earl, and again Mr. Lockhart returned home blessing God for having prospered him in his efforts."*

In after days when a new church was required, it is interesting to observe the cordial goodwill with which the movement was welcomed by all classes in the parish. The best site in the place was alongside of the manse, and it was most handsomely given at a nominal feu-duty by the present Earl of Stair, who had succeeded his uncle. A plan was prepared by Messrs. Barclay, architects, Glasgow. Every heritor in the parish subscribed toward the building, the lowest of these subscriptions being £10, the highest £50, the aggregate £200. The congregation, the entire community of the parish, and also friends at a distance, all gave liberally. The foundation stone was laid by the late Lord Ardmillan amid a large concourse of the inhabitants. The church cost £1613, and was opened by the Rev. Sir Henry Moncreiff. With the broad Atlantic in front, the manse with spacious lawn on the north, the noble river Stinchar on the south, a bold hill crowned by the ruins of the grand old castle of Ardstinchar

* Disr. Mss. lxxxi.

behind—the Free Church is the finest architectural ornament of Ballantrae, and is all the more pleasing that it is entirely free of debt." *

There were parishes in which relief came in a remarkable way, through the sale of estates and the transference of the land from hostile to friendly hands. At Ochiltree, Ayrshire, the proprietors were almost all adverse; but a change took place, and the new landlords seem to have vied with each other in their acts of kindness to the Free Church. An eligible site on a nominal feu-duty was given by Mr. Bryden; a temporary place of worship was provided, rent free, by Mr. Cuthbert; while Mr. Ross of Lesnessock gave in perpetuity two acres of the best land in the parish as a glebe for one shilling a year.†

At Braco, Perthshire, no site could be got on the property where the people chiefly reside, but in the summer of the Disruption the estate was bought by G. D. Stewart, Esq., and Mr. Grant states he "not only granted sites to our heart's desire, but he also gave his cordial sympathy. While we worshipped in the open air in the midst of winter, he stood among my people—for there were no seats—during Divine service. He gave his money, his wood, his counsel, his influence, in support of our sacred cause, and his acts of personal kindness to myself were incessant. When I first waited on him, after he came to the property, and made him acquainted with our circumstances, he said, 'I knew that God did not send me here in vain.' The remark has been fully verified."‡

It is right that the zealous aid given by many of the female friends of the Free Church should not be forgotten.

At Kilwinning, Ayrshire, it was a devoted Christian lady, Miss Donald of Glenbervie, who originated the movement. When, at her request, Dr. Landsborough opened the services (15th June, 1843), she warned him to expect only from 12 to 15 hearers. The actual attendance was 50. An old Baptist chapel was rented, which soon got overcrowded. Ninety-nine members joined at the first communion. Miss Donald purchased a site for a church. A promising young preacher was called and

* Disr. Mss. lxxxi. † *Ibid.* xxxvi. p. 4. ‡ *Ibid.* xiii. p. 8.

ordained, and they soon had a congregation of 170 members, with a church seated to hold 450 sitters, free of debt.

In this connection the writer may be allowed to record one personal reminiscence of a call which he made by invitation, in the summer of 1843, at Langton House, where the Dowager Marchioness of Breadalbane and Lady Hannah Tharp then resided. Much was said about the Free Church and her prospects, and many inquiries as to the circumstances of his parish at Kinneff, and, when he rose to leave, they put into his hands, with a few kind words, the sum of £150 to aid in providing a manse. It was in this quiet way that many a generous act was done, of which little mention was made beyond the congregations and ministers immediately benefited.

In the Disruption Mss. we find the name of another friend—the Countess of Effingham—whose delight it seems to have been to aid our struggling congregations. At Kilsyth, Dr. Burns mentions that her attention had been "providentially directed to this poor place," and she assisted "so largely and substantially as to leave no residuum of debt, without aid from the central fund; besides giving pulpit cloth," &c.*

Again, at Unst, the most northerly parish in the Shetland islands, we find her doing similar work. Before the Disruption, the venerable Dr. Ingram had much opposition to contend with. In the spring of 1843, one of those formidable documents—an interdict—was obtained by the leading heritor, prohibiting him from holding a meeting in the church. It now lies before us duly written and signed in legal form, but pale and dingy with the lapse of years. In proper time it left Lerwick, in 1843, on its way to Dr. Ingram, but among the winds and currents of those northern seas its progress had not been propitious. Before Unst could be reached the meeting had been held, the speeches delivered, and the congregation had pledged themselves to leave the Establishment—a pledge which was amply fulfilled, when out of 1100 communicants 1000 joined the Free Church. It turned out that two churches were required, owing to the position of the population in different parts of the island. The difficulty would have been great, but it was met by one of these

* Disr. Mss. xxix. p. 15.

churches—that at Uyasound—being "erected chiefly by the liberality of the Countess of Effingham, who was led, through Dr. Chalmers, to take a warm interest in the religious condition of this remote island—the Ultima Thule of Scotland." It may be added that, at the opening of the other church, in November, 1843, a striking incident took place. The tent under cover of which the congregation had worshipped, during summer and autumn, was carried away by a furious tempest on the very day when for the first time the people entered their new church.*

It is difficult for the younger generation to understand what the Free Church of 1843 owed to that noble band of influential laymen who stood forward in her support, and to whom we have already referred.

Nowhere was the revival of evangelical religion more marked than among the upper circles of Edinburgh society. Dr. Erskine, Sir H. Moncreiff, and Dr. Jones had done much during the former generation, but it was when Dr. Andrew Thomson appeared in St. George's and was joined by Dr. Gordon and other men of similar power in the Edinburgh pulpits, and by Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Welsh in the Professors' chairs, that the array of intellect and genius on the side of Gospel truth made its influence felt through all classes of the community. The general feeling changed. A series of sermons by Dr. Thomson on the evils of the stage had such effect that the Edinburgh theatre was almost deserted. Many of the leading lawyers, physicians, bankers, and merchants were earnest Christian men, keeping up family worship regularly in their houses, and devoting themselves to Christian work in the different congregations with which they were connected. This was the class who instinctively, in the great majority of cases, rallied round the Free Church in her contendings.

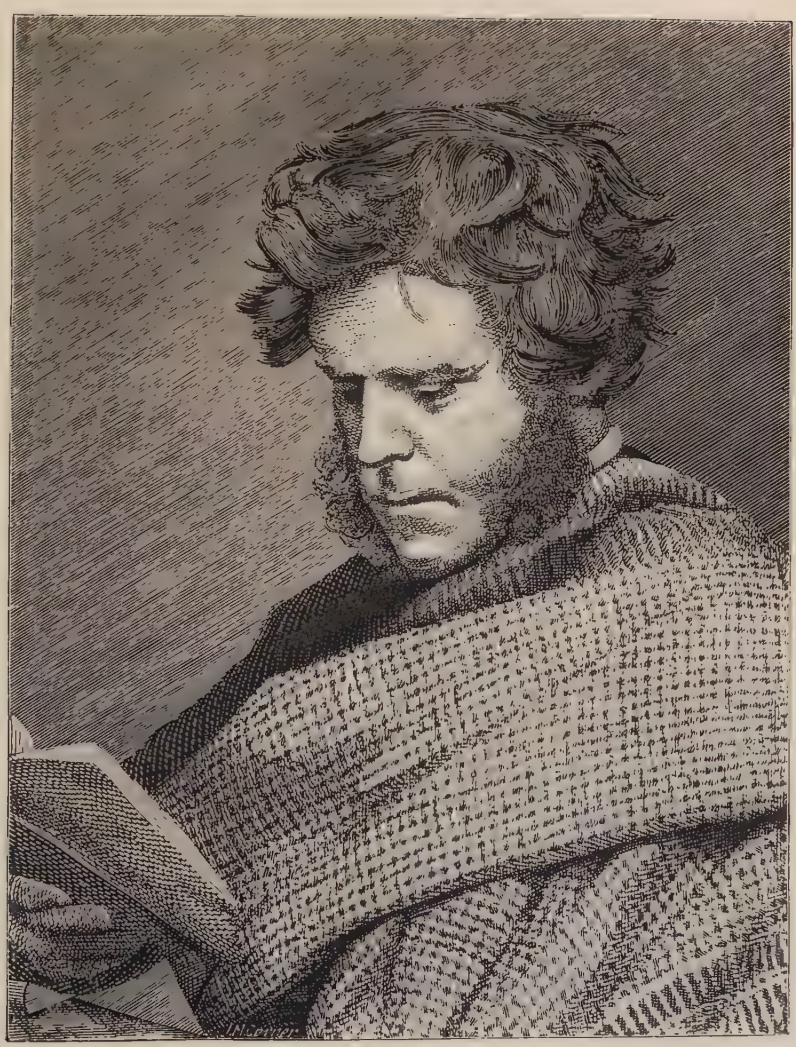
What admirable men these Edinburgh laymen were as a class, all Scotland knew. Of two of their number full biographies have been published, that of Mr. Robert Paul, Banker, by Dr. Benjamin Bell, and that of James Wilson, Esq. of Woodville, by Dr. James Hamilton. There are also in the "Disruption Worthies" sketches of the lives of Alexander

* Parker Mss., Ingram of Unst.

Murray Dunlop, M.P.; Graham Spiers, Sheriff of Mid-Lothian; John Maitland, Auditor of the Court of Session; Alexander Earle Monteith, Sheriff of Fife; John Hamilton, Advocate; James Crawfurd, W.S.; and James Bonar, W.S. And others there were not less distinguished: men like Lord Ardmillan and Lord Cowan among the Judges of the Court of Session; lawyers like J. G. Wood, W.S., Sheriff Jameson, and Sheriff Cleghorn; eminent physicians like Dr. Abercromby, Dr. James Wood, Sir James Y. Simpson, and Professor Miller, in whose case the Disruption formed the great turning-point of his religious history, and whose gift of ready eloquence was always at the service of every good cause; these, and many other influential supporters who might be named, gave to the Free Church an importance which even the men of the world could not fail to recognise.

Alexander Dunlop, advocate—afterwards M.P. for Greenock—deserves special notice. More than any other layman he was prominent in the midst of the Disruption conflict, arguing the case, guiding the counsels of the evangelical party, and shaping the course of the movement. Sacrificing his prospects at the bar, where he had given high promise of distinguished success, he threw himself into the struggle for what he felt to be the cause of God, upholding it with all the resources of his great legal learning and powerful reasoning. It was to him men looked for the drawing up of those documents in which the claims of the Free Church were embodied. It was he who arranged the course of procedure on the Disruption day, and ever afterwards, as her legal adviser, he gave himself heart and soul to the advancement of the Church in all her interests.

Another champion of the cause must also be specially referred to—Hugh Miller, editor of the *Witness*. The story of his life is as a household word in many districts of Scotland. The orphan child whose father was lost at sea—the stone mason—the banker's clerk—the man of science—the editor, his whole career at every step brought out the rare mental gifts of a man destined powerfully to influence the generation in which he lived. In the midst of the ten years' conflict, the thrilling appeals of his pamphlets and newspaper articles went all over Scotland, and stirred the hearts of his countrymen. Arguments



HUGH MILLER.

which in other hands were dry and abstruse, were translated by him into a style of English so pure, and presented in forms so powerfully attractive, that they came home at once to the feelings of the people. When the battle for Christ's headship, and for the liberties of the people, was fought and won in the country, it was Hugh Miller who stood in the front of the conflict.

In Glasgow the support of the laity was not less remarkable. There now lies before us a list of the office-bearers of a single congregation, St. Enoch's, which includes the names of Henry Dunlop of Craigton, Richard Kidston, John Wright, George Lyon Walker, James Stevenson, and others who rallied round Dr. Henderson; and if to these were added the kirk-sessions of St. George's, St. John's, the Tron, St. Matthew's, and other churches, there would be found a long array of the most prominent citizens, — men like Dr. Harry Rainy, Dr. Charles Ritchie, Nathaniel Stevenson, the Messrs. Blackie, publishers, Allan and William Buchanan, James Buchanan of Woodlands, Peter Brown, Islay Burns, William Towers Clark, William Crichton, R.N., Allan Cuthbertson, John Park Fleming, John James Muir, Matthew Montgomerie of Kelvinside, James Playfair, John Wilson, and many another name of high standing in the community. Some idea of what they were may be formed from the sketches of two of their number, which have found a place among "The Disruption Worthies"—William Collins, so distinguished for ardent zeal and untiring energy; and William Campbell, whose splendid liberalities can never be forgotten.

And as in Edinburgh and Glasgow, so in Dundee, Aberdeen, Paisley, Greenock, the lay friends of the Church stood eagerly forward in her support; indeed, there was hardly a town in Scotland where some of the leading citizens did not zealously uphold the cause.

In country districts we have also gratefully to recall the support given by a portion of the landed proprietors. Three months before the Disruption, they met in Edinburgh, coming up from their country seats, for the purpose of uniting to make known their views to the Government in favour of the Free Church. The list of seventy names included men of the highest consideration—the Duke of Argyle, the Marquis of Breadalbane

Sir Andrew Agnew, Fox Maule, Sir Patrick Maxwell of Springkell, Alexander Campbell of Monzie, Claude Alexander of Ballochmyle, Heriot of Ramornie, Captain Christie of Durie, Dickson of Hartree, Craigie of Glendoick, and others who were either present or intimated their adherence by letter. Of this honoured list there are some—alas! very few—who remain unto this day, but most have fallen asleep. It would be interesting to tell what they afterwards did for the cause in their separate localities, but no such record can be attempted in these pages. It may be enough to refer the reader to the "Disruption Worthies," where sketches are given of George Buchan of Kelloe, James Maitland Hog of Newliston, Patrick Boyle Mure Macredie of Perceton, Alexander Campbell of Monzie, Howieson Crawfurd of Crawfurdland, and Fox Maule, afterwards Earl of Dalhousie; and to the separate memoirs of Maitland Makgill Crichton by Mr. Taylor of Flisk, and Alexander Thomson of Banchory by Professor Smeaton.

To the valuable services rendered by these and others among our country gentlemen, we would fain pay the tribute that is due; but for the present we must confine ourselves to some of the brief notices found in the Disruption Mss.

One of the outstanding supporters in the North was Cluny Macpherson, chief of the clan, who, living in the midst of his people at Cluny Castle, zealously upheld the cause of the Church. Besides contributions in money, he gave sites for church and manse free of charge, with garden, pasture-ground, and much else for the use of the minister—all bestowed in a spirit of generous liberality. He has all along, says Mr. Shaw of Laggan,* been zealous in the cause of temperance and of education in the district. In passing through the country of the Macphersons, Dr. Begg was glad to find that the Free Church was attended by the chief of the clan. "I had the pleasure of preaching to him when he appeared in full costume, with philabeg and with all the other accessories of the Highland garb. I must say he has shown both good sense and high principle in joining his people to maintain amongst them a pure and free Gospel ministry."†

* Disr. Mss. lxxxvii. † Blue Book, 1845, p. 67.

In the Presbytery of Forfar mention is made of G. Lyon, Esq. of Glenogil, an heritor in the parish of Tannadyce. "At a period," says the Rev. D. Fergusson, "when few of the gentry of Forfarshire or representatives of old county families manifested any sympathy with the Gospel, Mr. Lyon, rising above the prejudices of his order, devoted his youthful energies to the cause of evangelical truth. When the testing hour came in 1843, he never hesitated as to his course of action." After the Disruption, he gave himself largely to the service of the Church, and was very helpful in establishing and organising the new Free Church congregations within the bounds of the Presbytery. "When I presided at the first dispensation of the Lord's Supper in the congregation of Memus of Tannadice, he officiated as an elder, and helped on the good cause with characteristic ardour. Some months later, I was present when he laid the foundation-stone of the Free Church in South Kirriemuir. This is not the place to enlarge on the services which were rendered by that truly good man to the cause of truth; but the Free Church does well when she embalms the memory of that small, but noble, band of country gentlemen who broke away from the traditional policy of their order, and were not ashamed to confess Christ." *

Mr. Taylor states that within the bounds of the Presbytery of Cupar (Fife), they had a goodly number of persons who, by their position in society, were fitted to conduct and encourage the movement. "There was Maitland Makgill Crichton of Rankeillor, and his brother, Captain James Maitland at Rossie. There was James Ogilvie Dalgliesh of Woodburn, and his brother, Captain Archibald Dalgliesh. There were the Heriots of Ramornie, Mrs. Makgill of Kemback and her daughters, Mrs. Bethune of Blebo, and Mr. Meldrum of Craigfoodie. Mr. Rigg of Tarvit returned from the Continent in 1843. An hour's conversation with Dr. Begg supplied the old man's mind with the leading facts and strong points of the controversy. He declared himself for the Free Church, and unflinchingly and most heartily he stood by her to his life's end. My pen would readily record my impressions of this 'good old country gentleman, all of the olden time.' As an only son, and the heir of

* Rev. D. Fergusson, Disr. Mss. lxxviii. pp. 11, 12.

Tarvit, he held in his early days a commission in the Guards. I remember him telling me, with great pleasure, of a little interview he had with George III. He was on duty in one of the London Parks, mounted on horseback, and in full regimentals. His Majesty accosted him in passing—'From what part of the country are you, young man?' 'From Scotland, please your Majesty.' This was all, but simple as it was, it dwelt on the old man's mind, as a sunny spot, that he had spoken to the King. Mr. Rigg had been a foxhunter in his day, and his house was distinguished for its lavish hospitality; and he was obliged to live for a time on the Continent. When he returned to Tarvit, in 1843, his old kindness and liberality continued, but they were directed into new channels. He now laid himself and his means out for good-doing. He opened his house for the entertainment of those who came on the Church's work. Mr. Reid of Collessie named him the 'Gaius of the Church.' In all this, he was aided and guided by his daughter, who was ready for every good work.

"I must not omit in this enumeration, the Misses Moncrieff of Southfield, Auchtermuchty. They lived a life of faith, and prayer, and devotedness. The cause and Church of Christ were their chief interest and joy." *

Of all the landlords, however, who befriended the Free Church, the most conspicuous was the Marquis of Breadalbane, the notices of whom, as given in the Disruption Mss., must not be omitted. Educated for a time under the care of Dr. Brown, of Langton, he had been early taught the principles of Presbyterianism—his country's religion—and, in after life, adopted them on thorough conviction, identifying himself with his Church in London as well as in Scotland. Of his services in Parliament, when single-handed he upheld the cause of the Free Church among his Peers, this is not the place to speak, but the support which he gave to the cause on his extensive estates well deserves to be remembered.

During the spring of 1843, the Rev. A. Sinclair states, a deputation came to Kenmore to address the people of the parish, and were cordially received by the Marquis. "Mr. Duff,

* Disr. Mss. xxxvii².

then parish minister, declined to give the keys of the church, on the ground that the object of the deputation was to disturb the peace of the Church. The Marquis, however, was not to be defeated. He sent a second messenger to say to Mr. Duff that while on Sabbath he would be left in undisturbed possession, on every other day he held his right as heritor to have the use of them. The keys were given up, the church doors thrown open, and the deputies addressed a large and enthusiastic meeting. His Lordship also spoke, and gave, as he was well able to do, a lucid and convincing exposition of the points he handled. The result was that the people in a body signed their adherence." *

The keynote was thus struck in the Breadalbane district, and after the Disruption, which soon followed, the most effectual help was given. The following description by Mr. Clark of Aberfeldy will enable the reader to understand the important services which were rendered :—

"It is pleasing to record that there was no refusal of sites, no real hardship worth mentioning. This was owing, under God, in no small measure to the influence of the most extensive landed proprietor within the bounds—an enlightened, patriotic, Christian nobleman—the last Marquis of Breadalbane, who, while most of the landed aristocracy were indifferent or hostile, cast in his lot, heart and soul, with the Free Church. 'Out-and-out a Scotchman in his spirit, his predilections, his principles, and in the higher aims and objects of his life,' says one who knew him well (Professor William Chalmers, of London), 'his general character was that of manly strength. Like his person, firmly built, it was solid, sturdy, simple, unpretentious, but breathing unmistakably an air of conscious elevation, inborn dignity, and native greatness. His intellect was uncommonly vigorous, searching, and comprehensive, capable of grappling with any subject, sure to examine it on every side, and almost certain, not swiftly, but after due deliberation, to arrive at the soundest conclusion.'

"His sympathies had been with the Non-Intrusion party throughout the whole of the controversy. In his place in

* Disr. Mss. lxiii. p. 4.

the House of Lords, in a masterly manner, he vindicated the claims of the Church and the independent jurisdiction of her Courts. When the crisis came, he showed his independence of thought and action, and strength of principle, yet acted with his usual deliberation. It was not for some days after the Disruption that he announced his resolution to vindicate his own principles as a Presbyterian, and to leave the Established Church. 'In what I did for the Presbyterian cause,' said he, 'although my services were poor and small, I trust they were honest. *I endeavoured to follow those principles in which I was first instructed as a Presbyterian, and which I am determined to pursue through life. Let them say what they will, it is we who have succeeded. We have lost the aliment of the State, and pain and privation have been the consequence; but at this moment here we stand, safe through the trials of the conflict, pure as in the times of our fathers, the Free and ancient Church of Scotland. We acknowledge no Head but Christ.*'

"With the sympathy and substantial help of such a nobleman and elder on her side, the Free Church in the district of Breadalbane speedily grew in strength and shape. It was no easy task to supply ordinances to so many hungering for the word of life. The cry from every side—from Amulree to Foss and Rannoch—was, Send us ministers to preach. It was a busy time, but a time of quickened earnestness, and of real blessing to many. Ministers from a distance came and gave help. The Marquis showed them much kindness and hospitality. Conveyances from Taymouth were placed at their disposal, to carry them from place to place to proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom. With all his favour for the Free Church, never did tenant, servant, or dependant suffer at Lord Breadalbane's hands for his religious convictions, nor was he asked what Church he belonged to.

"Mr. Stewart, the outgoing minister of Killin, had, of course, to quit his manse; but the residence at Finlarig was at once fitted up for his reception. At Strathfillan and on both sides of Loch Tay the places of worship and manses were given for the use of the Free Church. The time and services of his

Lordship's overseers were as entirely given to the planning and erection of temporary places of meeting as if these were parts of the estate's improvement. His contributions in timber and money to these, and afterwards to the substantial building of churches and manses at Kenmore, Aberfeldy, &c. &c., were very munificent. He gave the same friendly help to the Free Church on his extensive estates in Argyllshire, besides his many liberal contributions to meet other pressing requirements of the Church beyond his own territory. Nothing lay so near his heart as the mental, moral, and religious elevation of the people on his estates, which he justly regarded as the best guarantee for the improvement of their social condition and material comforts; and cheerfully and liberally did he help the people in the erection of schools on his extensive property, which have proved an incalculable blessing to the rising generation."*

How all this drew to him the hearts of his people may be seen from the statement of Dr. Chalmers at the Inverness Assembly in 1845:—"As a living proof that our position has no effect in loosening those ties which ought to subsist between superiors and inferiors, let me advert to what came under my own observation last week in the district of Breadalbane. I was then on a visit to the Marquis, . . . and I will just say that so far from devotion to superiors being slackened or relaxed by our Free Church system, there is no district in the Highlands where you see it in greater perfection at this moment than in the district of Breadalbane, enthroned as that noble Marquis is in the love and confidence of all his people. . . . In virtue of his being a friend of the Free Church, the high views of chieftainship sit all the more securely and all the more gracefully upon him."†

* Disruption Mss. lx. pp. 1-3.

† Dr. Chalmers, Ass. Proc. 1845, ii. p. 106.

XXXIII. Prejudices Removed.

It is right to record some of those cases in which the hostility of adversaries was changed into a feeling of cordial goodwill.

"Be it remembered to their praise," says Dr. Guthrie, "that the two great statesmen [Lord Aberdeen and Sir James Graham,] who were made tools of by a miserable party on this side of the border, did confess—the one publicly, on the floor of the House of Commons, and the other, to my knowledge, privately—that the one act of their lives which they looked back on with the deepest regret was the part they had been led to play." Alluding to Dr. Guthrie's statement, Mr. Murray Dunlop, M.P., said publicly at Carlisle (26th September, 1862): "I think it right to confirm that statement by repeating what Sir J. Graham said to myself. About a year or two before his death he said, in a very earnest tone and manner: 'I have never ceased to deplore the part I took in your Scotch Church affairs.'" *

This change was what Dr. Chalmers confidently expected: —"I believe the upper classes very honestly thought very ill of us. They looked on us as so many Radicals and revolutionaries; and I have heard some of the higher classes for whom I have the greatest respect associate the Disruption with the idea of a coming revolution. I have myself heard them speak so; but I believe that the experience of our being a far more harmless generation than they had any conception of previously, has gone a considerable way to mitigate that feeling, and I trust that the mitigation will go on." †

Within three weeks of the time when these kindly words

* Life of Dr. Guthrie, ii. p. 66.

† Report on Sites, iii. p. 136, q. 6436.

were spoken, the great leader had gone to his rest; but many examples of the happy change he expected, soon showed themselves.

One thing which helped forward this result was the tone of those farewell sermons—the parting words in which the outgoing ministers had taken leave of their people. How this was done the reader has already seen; but additional examples may here be given from the feelings expressed by Mr. Sym, of Edinburgh, and his friend, Mr. Craig, of Sprouston. While urging his hearers solemnly to consider what faithfulness to Christ required, Mr. Sym went on to say: "There are some among you from whom I expect to be separated, and for whom I cherish a profound respect and most affectionate esteem. . . . Examine narrowly the grounds of your conduct. 'Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.' 'Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;' for 'whatsoever is not of faith is sin.' If we must separate, let us at least part in peace, not in anger; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God—not in the exercise of supercilious pride or intolerant bigotry, but in the exercise of an enlarged charity, with mutual regret and with mutual desires for each other's welfare." *

In similar terms Mr. Craig took leave of those who remained in the Establishment:—"I have but one request to make—viz., that you would call to mind and lay to heart the truths of the Gospel which it has been my privilege from Sabbath to Sabbath to make known to you. You have my sincere wishes and prayers for your spiritual and temporal wellbeing; and let me assure you that I will not soon forget the uniform kindness, and forbearance, and respect which I have experienced at your hands."

When ministers thus publicly left their churches with the law of kindness on their lips, the hostility of their opponents might well be disarmed. In private, also, efforts were made to retain the goodwill of former friends.

A fine instance of this occurred at Collessie, in Fife. Mr. M'Farlan, minister of the parish (afterwards Dr. M'Farlan, of

* Memoir of Rev. J. Sym, p. 80.

Dalkeith), had rendered effective service during the Ten Years' Conflict, and had been honoured by an interdict. He was conspicuous, for example, on that day already referred to, when the Presbytery of Cupar met in the church at Flisk, and Dr. Anderson, in presiding at the induction of Mr. Taylor, took advantage of his position to make an attack on the evangelical majority of the Church of Scotland under cover of a charge to the newly-settled minister. The address, Mr. Taylor states, gave rise to an animated discussion. "Mr. M'Farlan, of Collessie, but since removed to Dalkeith, to our Presbytery's loss, a man of clear mind and ready words, asked the people to remain; and animadverting with merited severity upon the Doctor's address, moved that the term '*suitable*,' with which the clerk in his blundering haste had characterised the address, be omitted."*

Ready thus to take his part in debate, and to suffer when the time came, he knew at the same time what was due to the courtesies of life. The patron of the parish—a resident heritor, who had been uniformly kind, to whom, indeed, he owed his appointment—had shown signs of dissatisfaction, and Dr. M'Farlan wrote him a letter, which deserves to be given in full:—

"Manse of Collessie, *May*, 1843.

"Dear Sir,—You have already received, I have no doubt, official notice of the vacancy in the parish of Collessie, and the cause of that vacancy. I think it, however, only an expression of due respect to you as the patron of that parish, and by whom I have been so much obliged, to communicate with you directly on the subject. I shall not trouble you by an attempt to detail the reasons that have influenced me, along with so many of my brethren in the ministry, to resign my connection with the Establishment. Suffice it to say, that we are acting on a clear, deep, and conscientious conviction that the Established Church of Scotland, as defined by recent decisions of the Civil Courts—decisions virtually approved and ratified by the Legislature of the country—convert it into a kind of institution which we did not understand it to be when we became ministers of that

* Disr. Mss. xxxvii. p. 8.

Church; and that the only course that remained for us, as honest men and ministers of the Gospel, was to retire from an Establishment, the constitution of which, as so explained, we could no longer approve. Allow me, however, to say that I do not on that account feel the less indebted to you, as patron of the parish of Collessie, for the very handsome and disinterested manner in which you presented me to that charge. You acted, I believe, on public grounds alone, with exclusive reference to the interests of the parish in making that appointment, and I can only desire that during the period of my incumbency I had, by the blessing of God, been enabled more fully to justify your choice. You will believe me, that it is not any want of gratitude to you, or any feeling of dissatisfaction with a situation in every respect so very desirable, that influenced me in coming to the resolution I have taken. So far from it, the greatest sacrifice I have ever been called upon to make is that which I have made in resigning my place as a minister of the Establishment. Nothing but a deep sense of duty could have induced, or indeed would have warranted, our taking the step we have done. The course we have felt ourselves bound to adopt you may not think was called for, you may not approve. But you will allow me to express a hope that those mutual feelings of personal respect and goodwill which should universally prevail, will not be extinguished, or even diminished, by the distressing circumstances which, in the course of a wise but inscrutable providence, have been permitted to arise."

The desire thus shown by the ministers to remove prejudice and restore kindly feeling met its reward.

Sometimes the response came at once. At St. Cyrus, where the farewell sermon was preached by the Rev. A. Keith, jun., assistant and successor to his father, the well-known Dr. Keith, one of the heritors, Mr. Straiton of Kirkside, an adherent of the Establishment, gave a signal proof of personal regard. That Sabbath afternoon he sent a letter expressed in strong terms of respectful kindness, and enclosing a contribution of £30 in aid of the Free Church of St. Cyrus.

Another of these marked examples occurred at Callander, in the case of Mr. Donald M'Laren, who is described as a

true Highlander of the Celtic type. He had begun life as a small farmer and drover, had added to this the business of private banking, and being a man of great sagacity and energy, as well as benevolence, had risen to a position of affluence and almost unlimited influence in the town and parish, owing to the confidence which all men reposed in him.

At first he was not only hostile to the Free Church, but looked on the active members of the party with keen feelings of resentment. With all his influence he took a leading part along with the parish minister in his efforts to defeat them. Circumstances, however, the details of which need not be given, led him to reconsider the whole question, and the result was a complete change of his opinions. He was not a man of many words, but once his mind was made up he sought the leaders and asked, "What progress have you made in this Free Church undertaking of yours?" "They frankly told him all. The beginning was small; but small as it was, their hope was good. 'Our great difficulty,' they said, 'at present is, to obtain a site on which we may build our church.' 'That ought not to be a difficulty in this wide country,' casting his eyes round on the landscape as he spoke; 'and it will no longer be your difficulty.' He asked to see the design of their future church which they had adopted in view of building. A Tanfield Hall sketch was produced, simple enough, but of the kind which was then, especially in the poorer localities, very generally chosen by the people for the accommodation which they should require when compelled to abandon the places of worship in which they and their fathers in past generations had worshipped. Mr. M'Laren invited his wondering auditors to meet him next morning, and to bring with them implements for digging. They did so, filled with thankfulness for the light thus shed on their path. The site was granted, a gift, and on easy conditions. It was the beautiful spot on which the Free Church of Callander now stands, close to the river, and in the immediate vicinity of the chapel where the meeting was held at which was inaugurated the movement that had this happy termination. To the gift of the site Mr. M'Laren added a contribution to the funds of the local committee of £200. Thus it was all joy and gladness in the hearts of the friends of

the suffering Church at Callander."* The gift thus bestowed was the first of a long series of munificent contributions by the donor to the cause of the Free Church.

In another district of the Perthshire Highlands there was an influential landed proprietor who, "partly from not having given attention to the subject, and partly from having imbibed the prejudices of the social circle in which he moved, had taken up an attitude of decided opposition to the Free Church. The minister of a neighbouring charge had been appointed to preach in the glen. The laird invited him to the hospitality of his mansion on the Saturday, for in spite of his prejudice, he had as kindly a heart as ever beat in a Highlander's breast. Next morning the people would scarcely believe their eyes when they saw the laird driving the Free Church minister up to the wooden church, or refrain from looking their delight—for he was greatly beloved—when they saw him sitting among them as a devout worshipper. The truth commended itself to his conscience. It was his first Sabbath in the Free Church, but not his last. He was rarely absent on a Sabbath thereafter. Not long after, he gave sites for church and manse on his own lands, and contributed handsomely to the buildings. Not in all the Highlands was there a more punctual attender on ordinances, or a member more warmly interested in the prosperity of the congregation, or a more regular and generous contributor to its funds, or one whose removal by death in 1868 was more sincerely and extensively lamented—as the considerate friend of the poor—ever ready to lend a helping hand to all that was for the good of the people among whom he dwelt,—the useful country gentleman and the Christian. 'Come and see.' He came among us, saw, heard, judged for himself, and groundless prejudice gave place to cordial sympathy." †

Among the Ayrshire proprietors one of the most prominent site refusers was the amiable and popular Earl of Eglinton, but Mr. Pinkerton of Kilwinning tells how in the course of a few years the congregation had to acknowledge his kindness as well as that of the parish minister. The site at first purchased by

* Memories of Disruption Times, by Rev. Dr. Beith, p. 100.

† Disr. Mss. lx. p. 3, 4.

Miss Donald was the best that could be got at the time, but proved not very suitable. The congregation continued to increase; the church got to be too small. "It was resolved that a new church should be built, but it was felt that it would be vain to build unless a good site were obtained. It happened that one of the best sites in the parish was unoccupied. The lord superior was the late Earl of Eglinton. But would he grant a site for a Free Church? I resolved to wait upon his lordship, but I did so with many fears. He received me courteously, and on my stating the object of my mission, he at once said, 'I shall be very happy to give you what you wish; where do you desire to build?' My answer was—'Unless we get a good site we need not build. The most desirable place is on the rising ground in the Howgate, in the field adjoining the Parish Church manse.' 'By all means, you shall have it,' was the Earl's reply.

"Thankful and gratified in the highest degree, I took my leave. In passing through the hall I met his lordship's factor, to whom I communicated the result of my interview. 'Oh,' replied he, 'you cannot get that site. His lordship has forgotten the promise he made to Dr. Campbell (the Established Church minister), that the field should not be built upon during Dr. Campbell's life; that field is tabooed.'

"Dr. Campbell was, and had long been, the leader of the Moderates [in the Presbytery]. He was a most honourable and gentlemanly man. I immediately went to him and stated how matters stood. 'It is true that Lord Eglinton, out of regard to myself, promised that this field, being alongside of my manse, would not be built upon in my lifetime; yet I cannot refuse; I will not stand in your way in building a church.'

"A very handsome church on a commanding site was built; and as building happened at the time to be very cheap, church and spire, together with an illuminated clock, which sends its light all along the main street, cost only £2300. It was opened clear of debt in September, 1861, by the Rev. Dr. Guthrie."

In Fife, Mr. Taylor speaks of a proprietor in the neighbourhood who had refused a site to the Free Church in decided terms, but who, in after years, became a frequent attendant

along with his family. "Born an Episcopalian, and bred at Oxford, his views of Divine truth were Arminian, if not semi-Pelagian. In a house where he was calling, a little volume which treats of Divine grace lay on the table. He looked at it, and read its contents, and his remark was, 'I hate these doctrines.' These doctrines he now holds and loves. I have noticed a very great change in his views; others have observed it. What a first-rate Presbyterian elder he would have made. He visits the sick and prays with them. He is ready for every good work. But this is one of the sad legacies which the Stuart dynasty have left to our country—the gentry separated from their country's Church."*

One of the most interesting examples of these favourable changes occurred in the family of Colonel Campbell of Possil. We have seen the hardships under which the congregation at Torosay had to worship in the gravel pit under high-water mark. "But better days dawned at last on this faithful people, not one of whom ever showed the white feather, or returned to the Establishment, though without a place of worship for nearly ten years, and without a minister of their own for twenty-six years. The son of Colonel Campbell, who succeeded to the estate on his father's death, with a generosity which was characteristic of him, granted a site on the most favourable terms,—indeed for a nominal feu-duty. And what was more gratifying still, the site was granted on a beautiful knoll near to the old and much-loved gravel pit round which so many memories had gathered, and which was rendered sacred by so many hallowed associations. But the obligations of the Free Church people of Torosay to cherish with deepest gratitude the memory of Captain Campbell and his family, did not cease even with the gift of a site. Where was the money to come from with which to build a church? The congregation was poor and comparatively small. The Free Church had her hands full—more than full—of the work of building churches, to be able to render very substantial aid to the poor congregation at Torosay. But neither the Church at large, nor the congregation at Torosay, was called upon to raise the necessary funds, for they were

* Disr. Mss. xxxvii.[2] p. 20.

already raised chiefly by the kind exertions of the then Mrs. Campbell, with, I believe, the help of her sisters-in-law, who were active helpers in every good cause. Thus at length, in 1852, a neat and comfortable edifice was reared, rejoicing in a belfry and bell, the pride of the villagers; and, thanks to the generous-hearted son and other members of the family, the ill-advised treatment which the Free Church congregation at Torosay had received at the hands of the father was more than atoned for. The few who still remain of those who passed through these times of trial look back upon them with joy and thankfulness as times of blessing—times of strong faith, fervent prayer, and a quickened religious life. And as they rejoice in the grace that has enabled them to stand faithful in bearing testimony to the crown rights of Christ, and that has so abundantly bestowed upon them all the religious privileges which they now enjoy in connection with their much-loved Free Church, they heartily exclaim, 'Not unto us, O Lord! not unto us; but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy and Thy truth's sake.'" *

At Latheron, Caithness, the circumstances also are full of interest. Mr. Davidson had always lived on friendly terms with the heritors of the parish, not a single misunderstanding having arisen during the long period they had been together. "I always treated them with the respect due to their station, and I never found that they undervalued the influence and importance that belonged to mine. . . . But while they were thus favourably disposed towards me, several of them were bitterly opposed to the principles I held, and to the Free Church as a body. This they soon manifested in various ways, especially when the time came for inducting my successor into the Parish Church." The whole proprietors supported the new comer, and exerted their influence to make up a congregation. "Promises and threats were resorted to by one or two, but when Sabbath came there was no response; nothing save empty seats stared the poor minister in the face, with a solitary heritor perched in each of the large, deep galleries. Even liveried coachmen and footmen refused to accompany their masters into the deserted church, for, after unyoking their horses, they came and worship-

* Disr. Mss. lxxxii.

ped with the Free congregation. All this must have been sadly annoying to their masters, who were high-spirited gentlemen, and I often wondered how they bore it, especially considering that, in all other cases, they were accustomed to implicit obedience from all their dependents, for their tenants had no leases and could be removed, as was often the case, for any act of disobedience. . . . To be deserted by their servants in particular, was intolerable, for they had not a single person without or within doors, from the grieve and housekeeper down to the herd boy or girl, that would enter the church with them. Here was evidence—if such had been wanting—that the reign of feudalism was gone."

How the leading heritor, the highest in rank as well as in zeal for Moderatism, acted on the occasion we formerly saw (see *ante*, at page 359) ; but ere long there came a change. "Strange to say, from being the most opposed, this proprietor was the first to acknowledge his error, and to become a regular worshipper in our church. Some time after the Disruption he fell into rather delicate health, and on one occasion when visiting him—for our friendship had not ceased, although not quite so cordial as formerly—he asked me if we had any seat to spare in our church, as he had a mind to become a hearer with us. I told him that we had just reserved one principal seat in case any of the heritors should wish for it, and that I was sure none would be more welcome to it than himself. He thanked me very kindly, and said that he intended coming the first Sabbath, which he did, and ever after so long as health permitted.

"A few months after this, another principal heritor, who also was formerly much opposed to us, asked me the same question, but to him I was sorry we had no seat to give. I added, however, that there was room in the manse seat to which he would be most welcome, only it was close to the pulpit. 'No matter,' he said, 'for I am not coming to see or be seen, but to hear.' He did come, and a more serious and devout hearer I never saw. . . . At the first term he had a seat expensively fitted up by himself, and when asked by his workmen what colour of cloth should be used, his answer was, 'By all means uniform with the pulpit.' Indeed he became truly serious, and

seemed daily to rise in the estimation of all ranks. But alas, the seeds of consumption (of which his mother died), were deeply sown in his constitution, and carried him off in a few years in the prime of life, to the great grief of his numerous tenantry, to whom he had latterly much endeared himself. The other proprietor to whom I have alluded was cut off much in the same way. Both of them became remarkably changed in all respects; were much occupied in reading the Scriptures; would converse freely on religious subjects, and from being our open foes became our warmest friends." *

Of all these cases, however, the most remarkable is that of Portpatrick, the full details of which are given by Mr. Urquhart:—

"The old parish church had become insufficient, and a handsome new church, with ample accommodation, was erected about a year before the Disruption. The site had been selected, and the building planned with a view to extensive land decorations on the surrounding slopes, which, had they been carried out, would have made Portpatrick one of the finest pictures on the south of Scotland. All had been taken from a sketch of admirable artistic skill by the accomplished wife of the principal and only resident heritor, General Hunter Blair of Dunskey. He was very proud of it, and it would be heartless to deny him all sympathy with his bitter disappointment, when he was informed after the Convocation, that a large majority of the communicants had signed a resolution to leave the Established Church if the apprehended Disruption took place. He wrote to a relative, that as Mr. Urquhart had first persuaded him to erect a church and then robbed it of its congregation, he could have no further intercourse of any kind with him. This apparently hopeless ending of ten years' friendship, was succeeded immediately by active opposition. Tenants and retainers, all who were likely to desire the patronage or to fear the displeasure of the Laird of Dunskey, were set upon by the factor, and urged to withdraw their adherence. One widow, on her refusing, was deprived of a salary formerly paid to her as a favourite teacher. But all proved so unavailing, that even some of the principal

* Parker Mss., Latheron, p. 17.

servants of the family, on the morning of the first Sabbath after the Disruption, when asked where they were preparing to go, were strengthened to reply, civilly but firmly, that they meant to go to the Green. The Green, commonly called 'the Ward,' was the open space under the cliffs to the north of the harbour, which had been selected for the open-air worship of the Free Church, because, being in possession of the Commissioners of the harbour works, it was free from any immediate danger of an interdict by local parties, and admitted of an easy adjournment to the sea-beach in case of unexpected interference. Here the congregation worshipped for four months unmolested.

"The church at Portpatrick was roofed before winter, but before this, General Blair and his wife had left the neighbourhood and gone to the Continent in disgust, having advertised the mansion-house and policies to be let for years. Before they left two most desirable offers were sent in. But both were respectfully refused on the ground that Dunskey could not be let to any one who was not attached to the Established Church, and those who had offered were known to belong to the Free Church. This principle of exclusion was carefully observed in the leases afterwards granted, but without much of the benefit contemplated.*

"After a site for the church was obtained with some difficulty, neither stone for building nor sand could be got from any of the proprietors. By the kindness of a tenant, the necessary quantity of stone was procured from blocks scattered over his farm, about three miles distant. A young grocer in the village, a Reformed Presbyterian, offered gratuitously the use of a small vessel belonging to him to bring granite sand from Brodick Bay, in the Island of Arran. On learning of this offer, the factor earnestly warned him that he would lose all the export trade from the Dunskey estate; but he answered, with his compliments, that he would be very sorry to lose the custom of Dunskey, yet, if it should be so, he would look for customers to some other quarter. No one could then have believed it possible that he would in after years become the largest tenant

* Disr. Mss. lxxxviii.

and the factor, not only on the Dunskey estate, but on the larger estates belonging to the family in Ayrshire.

"Of all the breaches of friendship caused by the struggles of the Disruption, that with General and Mrs. Hunter Blair lay heaviest and longest on my heart. I could not forget the years of familiar intercourse in which I experienced their kindness. I could not fail to see that a long life of military service in the wars both of Europe and India, had established in the mind of the General such habitual intolerance of insubordination that everything having the slightest aspect of this, was sure to exclude considerations which would otherwise have influenced his naturally tender and generous heart. Nor could I forget his singularly accomplished wife, whose music was fascination, her painting exquisite, and her figure and manner such as might have been the model of Rebecca on the tower.

"With such remembrances and associations, it would have been unpardonable if I had not felt it to be my duty to avoid everything which might even appear to be irritating. Accordingly, I objected earnestly in private to the applications for a site, and for indulgence in stone and sand, which I knew would be refused, as they were. And I took care that, as far as possible, the case of Portpatrick should not have a prominent place in the reports of the Church or in public discussions. Still the antipathy continued unabated, so that when, two or three years afterwards, the General was on a visit to Portpatrick, and saw me coming up the street, he coolly took the arm of a friend, and, turning half aside, allowed me to pass within about a yard of him, and in view of the gentlemen who were walking around. All seemed to be very hopeless in the case.

"In 1847 Miss Hunter Blair* wrote to me from Edinburgh that she was just leaving for Leamington, where her brother was ill, and, she feared, was drawing near his end. I was greatly distressed. This was the only breach which had not been healed. Even the minister whose deposition by the Assembly I had been commissioned, in the face of interdicts, to intimate on the street of Stranraer,—even he had welcomed me to his

* A most generous friend of the Free Church, who reduced her establishment that she might have the more to give.

bedside in his last illness. I could not go to bed without writing and posting a letter, in which I asked Miss Blair, if she should see fit, to say to her brother that I was grieved to hear of his illness; that I had not forgot years of intercourse with him at Dunskey; and that I prayed the Lord might be with him to bless his sickness to him, &c. &c.

"Immediately after posting the letter, I took fear lest it might prove offensive, and continued anxious for a fortnight, till Miss Blair informed me that, after consulting Mrs. Blair, she had handed my letter to her brother; and that in a day or two afterwards, on going to his room, he put his hand under his pillow, saying, 'Here, Jemima, is Mr. Urquhart's letter. Give him my kindest regards.' It was a relief inexpressibly comfortable. I knew the ice had been broken, but I could not anticipate the warm current which was to flow, and which warms my heart still in the remembrance of it.

"The General recovered, and was able to visit Portpatrick in August, 1848, along with Mrs. Blair. As soon as they arrived she called when I was from home, but instead of merely expressing her love to my wife as she did before leaving in 1843, with a refusal to see me, she expressed her regret that I was from home, as the General was very desirous to see me. On my return I went immediately to his hotel, where Mrs. Blair welcomed me with all the cordial freedom of former days. After some kind conversation, she said that the General would be sorry for not being at home to see me; that a quarrel between two of their friends, whom she named, was making them very uncomfortable; and the General thought I might be able to compose the strife, if I would allow him to refer the parties to *me, as an old friend of the family.* I could not fail to see the exquisite delicacy which had suggested this proposal, as silently conclusive of everything in my relation to them, and of those around them. There was no difficulty in the case referred to me. The parties generously accepted my recommendation, and were reconciled. A day or two after I had the pleasure of meeting them, and the other gentlemen of the neighbourhood, at dinner with the General and Mrs. Blair in the hotel.

"Oh! how freely I breathed the air on the following morning,

when I hastened to the private walks of Dunskey, on which for six years I never had set foot. When I came in sight of my old favourite walk in the glen, I felt it needful to lie down in the grassy slope, and to relieve my full heart by a flood of tears and thankfulness to God. But even then I did not know how truly the change for which I gave thanks was a work of grace. Nor did I know this till, on the General's death, about a year after, his widow came to secure some pictures and other things left to her. I had some sad but blessed interviews with her in the half-dismantled and desolate apartments of Dunskey, when she was weeping her eyes out, in painting from memory a likeness of her departed husband, which, as one well qualified to judge said to me, no one but a wife could have produced. I then learned that he had died blessedly in closest fellowship with a godly clergyman of the Church of England in whom he delighted.

"I could have no doubt that she had given herself to the Lord's service. On her return to London, her special interest was in a provision for the Sabbath comfort and spiritual welfare of girls engaged in warehouses and other establishments. They were provided for by their employers during the week, but were left to shift for themselves on the Sabbath. With the aid of Christian friends whom she engaged in her scheme, she secured, in various parts of London, accommodation to which girls might be invited, and might enjoy the order and privilege of godly families; morning and evening services being provided for them. About this scheme and its progress, she wrote to me freely. Her labours in visiting, inquiring, and arranging for it, must have been very great. A friend of mine calling on Mr. Nisbet, the well-known Christian bookseller, asked him if he knew Mrs. Hunter Blair, when he answered, 'O, yes; she was here just a little ago. She is one of the most devoted Christian workers in London.' Dr. Merle D'Aubigné, of Geneva, took a great interest in her work. In a letter to me she apologised for delay, saying that she had been so much engaged; that, having received a letter from Dr. Merle D'Aubigné, at same time with mine, she was answering both for the same day's post. It was her last letter to me. No one could tell me of her last hours; but,

I know that, having passed through the society of the Court in India, and through the society of artists in Rome, she gave up all to win poor, neglected girls to Christ; and that, after having at one time manifested such disgust at the Free Church as drove her and her husband from their home at Dunskey, she died a member of the Free Church, under the pastorate of Mr. Alexander, at Chelsea. In noting this last fact, however, I feel persuaded that churchism had nothing to do with it; but no one can mark the fact, as compared with its antecedents, without seeing in it a clear illustration of that new life in which old things are passed away, and behold all things have become new." *

There were many tokens of the goodness of God to the Free Church in Disruption times, but not the least remarkable was the change of feeling which such extracts show. Surely we may be allowed to regard these, and similar incidents, as in some measure the fulfilment of the promise that, "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

* Disr. Mss. lxxxviii.

XXXIV. Quoad Sacra Churches.

There was one class of congregations whose sacrifices were keenly felt at the Disruption—those in which the people, after building their own churches, were expelled from them by force of law. On leaving the Establishment, it was well understood that the old parish churches which the State had provided must be given up, but it was a different thing when men came to be deprived of buildings which they had themselves erected and paid for.

A story is told of a shrewd old Scotchman during last century, who on hearing any one praised as a very good man, used always to ask, "Have you ever had any dealings with him about money?" *That* he considered to be the real test; and certainly in the case of these churches at the Disruption, it yielded some rather remarkable results.

During the reign of Moderatism, certain Chapels of Ease, as they were called, had been erected in different parts of the country, but it had been done by the people under great difficulties—the heritors and the parish ministers being usually opposed to it.

On this point Lord Cockburn speaks with authority:—

"I was counsel for several years in all the chapel cases before the General Assembly, and can attest that what was *professed* by the Moderates was that they had no dislike to chapels, but what was *truly felt* and privately *avowed* was that they would much rather have a Roman Catholic Chapel than a Chapel of Ease in their parishes." *

"The very first time," Dr. Begg says, "I ever was in the old Assembly place of meeting in St. Giles', I witnessed one of the

* Journal, i. p. 342.

last cases of disputed *quoad sacra* churches. I remember very well forcing myself into that small, dark, cramped place, and seeing an old minister, who admitted that there was a population of 6000 in his parish, resisting most vigorously an attempt by the people to have a Chapel of Ease erected." *

Such resistance was not easily overcome; and during the hundred years which ended in 1834 there were only about sixty-three of these chapels built, all of them being left without Kirk-Sessions, and their ministers without a seat in the Presbytery.

The year 1834, however, marked the ascendency of the evangelical party, and a new era began. At once the chapels were taken out of their false position, and made parish churches *quoad sacra*. The meaning of the change was, that a parish was assigned to what were formerly chapels—a district within which ministers and elders might work for the spiritual good of the people. The territorial principle on which Dr. Chalmers laid such stress was thus made to take effect, and the moment this was done he felt himself free to begin the grand Church Extension movement, on which his heart had long been set. Aided by a band of able coadjutors, he traversed Scotland, and roused the country. It had taken 100 years to get sixty-three chapels built, but, at the close of one year's work, he was able to tell the Assembly of 1835 that a sum of £65,626 had been raised, and sixty-two additional churches had been built or were in progress, to meet the spiritual wants of destitute localities. Soon, the turmoil of the Ten Years' Conflict began, but he held on his course notwithstanding, and by the end of 1841 it was found that upwards of 200 new churches had been provided, at a cost of more than £300,000—a noble work, nobly carried out.

But then, in 1843, the question arose, What was to be done with all this property? Both parties having contributed to it, ought it not on some fair principle to be equitably divided between them after the Disruption had taken place?

The two Churches indeed might go to law, but it was represented that this would be an unseemly thing, injurious to religion, and that the better course would be to have the question

* Blue Book, 1847, p. 25.

submitted to some fair-minded laymen chosen by each of the parties, who could hardly fail to find a scheme of equitable adjustment.

By the Establishment, these proposals were rejected,—they would have the law enforced in all its rigour. In the state of mind in which the Judges on the bench then were, the result could easily be foreseen. Lord Cockburn has spoken strongly of the bias under which they acted. Legal grounds of course were found, and the whole property raised by the exertions of Dr. Chalmers was wrested from him and his friends.

The chief reason alleged by the Establishment in defence of this line of action was that they were trustees, and must take all that the law gave, not being entitled to do what a private individual might do. "We all know," Dr. Begg said in reply, "the theory of a corporate conscience, which, I understand, was described by Lord Thurlow as having neither a heart to be touched, nor a conscience to feel, nor a back to be scourged." But surely it was strange that a Christian Church, in dealing with another Christian Church, should refuse to be guided by those principles of honour which ought to guide a private individual in money matters.

There were among the members of the Establishment some who were staggered by such considerations. Even *M'Phail's Edinburgh Journal*, the bold opponent of the Free Church, is doubtful whether the Establishment were acting rightly in retaining these chapels. "Although, by some narrow legal technicalities they should continue in her possession, how could the blessing of God be expected to rest on a Church unrighteously extended and aggrandised?" *

On the part of the Free Church, there was a deep sense of the injustice of such proceedings.

One reason was, that by far the greater part of the money which had built these churches had been contributed by those who afterwards joined the Free Church. None knew so well as Dr. Chalmers, for it was he who had raised it, and his estimate was distinctly stated. The churches from which the Court of Session has ejected us were built—I do not think I over-

* Blue Book, 1847, p. 222.

estimate it when I say to the extent of seven-eighths—with our money.*

It so happened that a testing case occurred at Dundee, which put Dr. Chalmers's opinion to the proof, and showed who were the real builders of these *quoad sacra* churches. Just on the eve of the Disruption, the friends there were about to erect a mariners' church, and the money, amounting to £1000, had been subscribed and paid in, but the building had not been commenced. After May, 1843, it was resolved to return the money,† to the subscribers, leaving such of them as chose to take steps for the same object in connection with the Free Church. The result was that of the £1000, upwards of £900 was again subscribed and paid, and the building was proceeded with on the new footing. Had the work been begun a little earlier, the law would have deprived them both of the money and the building.

At Broomknoll, Airdrie, the same thing was shown in a different way. A legal deed had been drawn out in the usual form settling the property, but fortunately the last step had not been taken, the constitution had not been extracted. The congregation were able to do with their own what they chose, they retained it for themselves, and attached it to the Free Church. If the titles had been completed, the Establishment would have had the power of seizing the church, and it would have gone like the rest.‡

These cases which actually occurred may be held as showing approximately how the matter stood in other localities. Perhaps it was the consciousness of this which made the Establishment so unwilling to have the subscription lists looked into with a view to some equitable arrangement. But many members of the Free Church, who knew well where the money had come from, felt all the more keenly the treatment to which they were subjected.

There was a still stronger ground, however, on which they felt themselves aggrieved.

The civil courts decided that the *quoad sacra* churches must

* Report on Sites, iii. p. 143, q. 6480.

† Blue Book, 1844, p. 28. ‡ Parker Mss.

be reduced to the position of chapels of ease, and the Establishment acquiesced. But the money which built them had been raised on condition that they should be churches, not chapels,—churches *quoad sacra*. Men felt strongly the wrong that was done in keeping the money, and evading the express condition on which it had been paid.

The case of the new Glasgow churches will show how the question stood. A society had been formed for church extension in the city, and it was one of the fundamental articles under which the society was constituted that the money should be raised *only* on condition that the buildings should be churches *quoad sacra*, and not chapels. Under this stipulation the subscriptions were paid, and the work went on.

Now what the Free Church felt was, that afterwards, when the conditions could not be carried out, owing to the civil courts barring the way, the money in all fairness ought to be returned to the subscribers, or at least that they had a claim for some equitable settlement, by way of compromise.

There is a yet stronger point in the case, as a legal friend suggests—the money was given not only on condition that the chapels should be made churches, but that they should be so by the authority inherent in the Church herself. That was in the view of the subscribers. They paid their money to the Church which claimed to do this in her own right, and did it. The money is retained by a Church which owns that she has no such power or right as that on the faith of which the subscribers acted. Is that righteously done?

The result, however, was that the whole of these twenty churches, and many others in the same position, were seized by the Establishment as chapels of ease, and all proposals for an equitable adjustment were rejected.

What was felt about this at the time may be seen from the statement of Dr. Burns, in whose parish one of these cases occurred. "The Banton Church (Kilsyth) was for some years a very cherished object of proud regard. How is the gold become dim! Oh, how changed is the view in that direction. Doubtless had it been foreseen that the onward march of the Established Church was to be arrested, and the *quoad sacra* system

ruthlessly broken up, one stone would never have been laid upon another." *

"A few years before the Disruption, the Gaelic Church of Saltcoats was built by subscription at a cost of nearly £1000. More than half of this sum was collected by a blind gentleman —Alexander M'Dougall, Esq., Edinburgh—who, hearing of the difficulties of the poor Highlanders (they had only been able to subscribe £71), most generously came to their assistance, and, groping his way through the length and breadth of Scotland, raised for them the sum of £539, 8s. 10d., while, in addition to this, the Rev. Mr. M'Millan, Kilmorie, Arran, gave out of his own purse £40. At the Disruption, Mr. M'Dougall and Mr. M'Millan both joined the Free Church, as also did the congregation almost to a man, along with the Rev. Mr. Hamilton, their minister. For some years the Highlanders were allowed to remain in possession of their church, but at length the Established Presbytery invoked the strong arm of the law, and the poor Highlanders were cast out—two members only remaining—and the fruit of Mr. M'Dougall's labours is now a parish church. It is right to add, that when this was first proposed, Hugh Weir, Esq. of Kirkhall, himself a member of the Established Church, sought to shield the poor man's ewe lamb, indignantly saying, 'Take a church, built in this way, by subscription! We are not so poor that we cannot build one ourselves—let the poor Highlanders keep their church.'" †

The church of Sheuchan, Wigtownshire, may be taken as another example. It was built in 1840, at an expense of £1780, chiefly contributed by Sir Andrew Agnew of Lochnaw, Major-General M'Dowall, C.B., and their personal friends. A congregation of humble but respectable hearers had been gathered. At the close of 1844 legal proceedings were taken by the Establishment, and they were dispossessed. In handing over the keys, the two gentlemen, "the originators and chief promoters," entered a formal protest to the effect that the building was now to be devoted to purposes "diverse to what they intended" when they gave their money. The Presbytery, how-

* Disr. Mss. xxix. p. 21.

† Statement by Rev. D. Landsborough, Kilmarnock.

ever, got the keys, and the only use they could make of them was to lock up the church and lock out the people to whom it rightfully belonged. The congregation, without one solitary exception, went along with their minister, and got temporary accommodation at a neighbouring mill.

It seemed strange that the Establishment should grasp at churches for which they really had no use. At Haddington, for example, it was not pleasant to see, alongside of the Free Church, the former building from which the congregation were expelled standing for twenty years and more with its doors locked and windows broken.

Trinity Church, Aberdeen, one of the old chapels of ease, was long known in the city for the warm-hearted devoted congregation which filled its pews. The Rev. D. Simpson, their minister —one of the gentlest men who ever took part in religious controversy—was summoned to the bar of the Court of Session for breach of interdict. In his farewell sermon at the Disruption, he "spoke in generous and affectionate terms to the few who remained behind him," adhering to the Establishment. The changed aspect of the building, however, after he left, was too much for them. "They were soon scattered, and came to nought, and old Trinity Church was transformed into a dilapidated structure as if to remind the Establishment of the grievous wrong they had committed." *

The more respected members of the Established Church must not be held responsible for much that was done, but there were too many cases in which these congregations were not only expelled from their churches, but it was carried out in such a way as to make the expulsion needlessly irritating and offensive.

Sometimes legal expenses were unfairly run up. At Lybster, Caithness, the whole population of 2600 adhered to the Free Church, with the exception of six heads of families, and these had not contributed to the building of the church "above £5 [in all], if so much." When the Established Presbytery took action, they did so without notice. "A warrant" came down from the Court of Session demanding the church. "This course was quite unnecessary, as we never intended to dispute the case, nor said that

* Parker Mss., Rev. D. Simpson.

we would, had the church been claimed by the Presbytery. We therefore made no appearance in court, but were subjected to all the expenses incurred, amounting to £20. This was the most cruel part of the whole, and might well have been spared; but it was only of a piece with measures adopted elsewhere by the Establishment." *

At Blairingone, in the Presbytery of Auchterarder, the same thing was done with some aggravating circumstances. On Saturday evening, 17th February, 1844, the Rev. Mr. Noble and seven of the nine managers of his church were served with an interdict. No attempt was made to turn out the congregation until the stormy weather set in; and the communion was fixed for the Sabbath following. At the same time an interdict, with the attendant annoyance and expense, was altogether uncalled for, as in December last the Presbytery were officially informed that, while the congregation would do nothing to compromise their right to the building, they would deliver up the keys if demanded. . . . The sole object of the movement, it would seem, was to inflict trouble and expense on the adherents of the Free Church, who, with few exceptions, embraced the whole population.†

At Ardoch, Perthshire, the opposition was not less keen. An interdict had been obtained, but was held back for a time. They delayed "till the shortest day of the year and the storms of winter before they cast us out. 'Turn them oot! Turn them oot in the sna', and they will soon come in!' was the language of ——, an elder who left the Establishment at the Disruption, and then returned into it in the month of August." "For three Sabbaths I had to preach in the open field, but on the fourth we found shelter in a wooden shed."‡

In using the forms of law, a favourite device was to obtain an interdict, and suddenly serve it without warning on Saturday evening, so as to take minister and people by surprise. It was a vexatious proceeding, which went on for years. Judges who had never cited the congregation, or heard whether they

* Parker Mss. Latheron, pp. 9, 10.

† *Witness* newspaper, 24th February, 1844.

‡ Disr. Mss. xiii. p. 5.

had a word to say in their own behalf, gave their decree; and people and minister found on a Saturday night that they were to be houseless on the morrow.

A curious example of this had previously occurred at Tain in connection with the old parish church and burying-ground. "Under the evangelical ministry of the saintly Dr. C. C. M'Intosh, nearly the whole population of the town and parish of Tain joined the Free Church with him at the Disruption, leaving only a handful of people connected with the Established Church.

"In the centre of the town stands an old Romish church, which from the Reformation had been used as the Presbyterian parish church, until, on account of its insufficiency to contain the increased population, it was in 1815 relinquished for a larger new church. Surrounding the old church is the parish graveyard, through which a broad footpath ran; and on this path, at communion seasons, the communion table of the Gaelic congregation—who worshipped without, while the English worshipped within the church—was wont to be placed, the congregation being seated around the tent in the churchyard. It was disused for this purpose after 1815, sufficient ground being provided at the new church for the Gaelic congregation; and the old church was allowed by the heritors to fall into partial ruin.

"The Free Church had no difficulty in obtaining a site in town for the erection of a church, but was unprovided with any place for the accommodation of the out-door Gaelic congregation at communion times. They, therefore, on occasion of the two summer communions following the Disruption, pitched their tent in the old churchyard, where many generations of their forefathers sleep. The assembling there of such large congregations, numbering 2000 to 3000 people connected with the Free Church, was distasteful to one of the few people, a large heritor, who still adhered to the Establishment; and he, therefore, resolved to dislodge them, and that, too, in circumstances deliberately calculated to embarrass and annoy. Accordingly, at the communion in July, 1845, worship was allowed to be held as usual undisturbed on the Thursday, Fri-

day, and Saturday. The elders had placed the table, and made all other needful arrangements on Saturday evening for the service of the approaching Sabbath. But on Saturday night a Sheriff's interdict was served at this heritor's instance, 'prohibiting the Rev. C. C. M'Intosh, Free Church minister of Tain; his coadjutors, Rev. Dr. John M'Donald, Ferintosh; Rev. David Campbell, Tarbat; Rev. Gustavus Aird, Criech; Rev. Simon M'Lachlan, Cawdor, and all others whomsoever, from preaching or celebrating the Lord's Supper in the churchyard of the parish surrounding the old church.'

"The plan of interdict and time of serving it were well chosen to produce the utmost inconvenience to the congregation, or a breach of interdict by the officiating ministers. But a pious widow lady in the town had in her possession a field in the immediate neighbourhood of the Free Church, which she instantly put at the service of the congregation, thankful for having the opportunity of thus serving the Lord. To it the tent and communion table were instantly transferred late on Saturday night: there a happy communion season was enjoyed on the Sabbath. And thus the malice of the oppressor only served—no doubt, to his great disappointment—to find on an emergency a more convenient site for the worshippers. An old townsman, in speaking of this event, in which he made himself helpful to the elders, said to the writer: 'The whole town turned out as one man when the interdict became known. We swept off tent, table, forms, and chairs in one visit to the churchyard, so that there was no occasion for any one to pay a second visit to it.' And it was for ever abandoned, as a type of Moderatism.

"So little has the state of matters altered as to the return of the people to the Established Church that, when an assessment for the repair of the ecclesiastical buildings was laid on in 1877, amounting to £720, of this there was paid by Established Church lairds and feuars the sum of only £12." *

Such sudden expulsions seem to have been quite common in the case of *quoad sacra* churches.

On Saturday, 24th June, 1843, the Rev. Angus M'Bean,

* Disr. Mss. lxix.

Greenock, was interdicted from again entering his pulpit, and on the following day his church was preached vacant.*

On the 4th February, 1844, the doors of St. John's, Montrose, were shut against the congregation by interdict obtained by the Presbytery of the Establishment. The effect was to cast out a congregation of 1200 to 1400 people, including not a few of the leading citizens, in the midst of a severe snowstorm, and without warning.†

At Strathaven on the 21st July, 1843, late on the Saturday evening, before the Sabbath preparatory to the dispensation of the sacrament, the pastor was stunned by receiving a letter requiring him either to give up the possession of his church or to submit to the legal consequences of the refusal.‡

At Barrhead, near Paisley, the interdict was obtained on a Tuesday, but "was kept up and served only on Saturday evening. The congregation was accordingly driven out, and forced to worship in the open air for three months in sight of their own church, locked up and empty."§

But the most remarkable of all these proceedings was a proposal as to the debt on the buildings. Free Churchmen had been calling out for some equitable division of the property, and it occurred to some friends of the Establishment that the best plan would be to give Free Churchmen the debt to pay, while the Established Church got the buildings free. This was seriously contemplated.

At Woodside, Aberdeen, there was a debt of £1200, and the members of the Establishment "wished to hold the managers [with one exception, Free Churchmen] responsible, avowing their intention of seizing the building, leaving the managers to pay its liabilities." ||

In the case of Belhaven Church, Dunbar, there was a debt of £183, for which an elder in the Free Church had become re-

* Par. Mss. Presb. of Greenock.
† *Witness* newspaper, 14th February, 1844.
‡ *Ibid.* 21st February, 1844.
§ *Free Church Mag.* iv. p. 140.
|| Disr. Mss. xxvii. pp. 8, 9.

sponsible. The Established Presbytery demanded the church, but refused to acknowledge the debt.*

There was a beautiful simplicity in this arrangement which seems to have commended itself greatly to the Established Church in different parts of the country. At last the matter was actually taken into Court. The public had come to believe that any kind of action was sure to be successful if only it was against the Free Church, and the then Earl of Glasgow, along with the Presbytery of Paisley, acting apparently on this belief, took up the case of Barrhead Church, Paisley. They appeared in Court pleading that the debt (£1313) should be separated from the property, and the property given to them free, leaving the debt to others. But Lord Ivory, before whom the action came, made short work of their plea. The property and the debt on it must go together. If the Earl wanted the one he must take the other; and so that scheme of division fell to the ground.†

The result was that a good many of these churches were saved by the debt on them, and were retained for the people. The parties who had lent the money foreclosed; the property was put up for sale, bought by the congregation, and attached to the Free Church.

Union Church, Aberdeen, for example, had at the Disruption a communion roll of 1000 members, of whom 900, with all the officebearers, joined the Free Church, along with Mr. Allan, their minister. There was a debt of £1200. The large church soon presented a deserted and empty appearance with seldom more than thirty hearers in it. It was sold by public roup, and bought for the Free Church by the congregation, who gladly returned to worship within the old walls. There were similar results at Bonaccord and Woodside, Aberdeen; St. John's, Montrose; Hope Street, Glasgow; and in not a few other cases over the country, congregations considered themselves fortunate when there was debt on their churches.

And yet cases did occur where, in spite of Lord Ivory's decision, the property went to the Establishment, while the Free Churchmen had to meet the obligations.

* *Free Church Mag.* iv. p. 142.

† Decision given 19th July, 1845.—*Witness* newspaper, 30th July, 1845.

A mild example of this is given by Dr. Begg :—

There was a chapel not far from Edinburgh, which was relinquished not long after the Disruption, in connection with which a spire had been built, and a bell hung thereon. The spire had been paid for, but the bell had not. By-and-by an account came to one of the members of the Free Church for the bell, with an intimation that he must pay for it; and, at the same time, he was told he could not remove it, because it was a fixture. In point of fact, the worthy man had to pay £16, and two of the elders an equal sum, as the price of the bell, after they had left the church.*

But there were more serious cases. A church was built in Stirling by the indefatigable exertions of Dr. Beith, who, along with other managers, undertook the liabilities of the erection, on condition of being relieved by having the seat-rents for thirty years. When the Disruption came, these seat-rents were worth precisely nothing at all, and Dr. Beith was obliged, with other managers, to pay the debt—his share was £200, five other members of the Free Church losing similar sums—out of his own pocket; the Establishment at the same time taking from them the church. It was remarked at the time that, whatever law there might be in this case, there was great injustice.†

In the case of St. Leonards, Lanark, there was a considerable debt on the building. The congregation offered at once to vacate it, if the adherents of the Establishment would relieve them of the burden. But they had taken up the favourite idea of that time: "they insisted that the members of the Free Church should both pay the debt and give up the property." The matter hung in suspense for two years, causing great inconvenience to the Free Church congregation. After Lord Ivory's decision, the Establishment took different ground, "claiming the funds which they (the Free Church) might raise in St. Leonards." The congregation decided at once to leave, purchased and enlarged another church belonging to the Old Light body, and there they continued to worship.‡

* Blue Book, 1848, p. 288.

† *Ibid.* 1847, p. 222. ‡ Parker Mss., Presb. of Lanark.

At Arbroath, however, the question which had apparently been evaded at Lanark, came up in another form. In Ladyloan, the minister Mr. Leslie, and all his managers with one exception, adhered to the Free Church. It was not till 1845 that the building was claimed, and the moment the Establishment moved, they at once gave it up. Then, in 1848, an action was raised before the Court of Session, in which the Establishment claimed the whole seat-rents, collections, &c., during the time the congregation were meeting in the church from 1843 to 1845. These sums had all been expended for the purposes for which the people gave the money—minister's stipend, precentor's salary, &c.,—and yet the claim was that they should be refunded to the Establishment. After a lengthened litigation, the result was that the poor Free Churchmen were glad to submit to a decision which cost them £157, 8s. 9d., besides interest and modified expenses.*

How the ministers of the Free Church in those days dreaded the Court of Session, and shrank from it, may be seen from many of the records. In the words of Dr. Beith—"Justice, according to our impressions, had laid aside the band—the emblem of impartiality." "Only at rare intervals has anything of this sort been known. But at the time to which I refer we had fallen on evil days." †

The surrender of Lady Glenorchy's Church, Edinburgh, was one of the most mortifying incidents in the whole history of these cases. The distinguished Christian lady whose name it bears built the chapel in 1774, much against the will of the old Moderates, whose opposition was with difficulty overcome by Dr. Erskine, Sir H. Moncreiff, and others. The highest legal skill was employed by Lady Glenorchy to secure the building against that party in the future; she called in the aid of Mr. Crosbie, "the original of the skilful lawyer in 'Guy Mannering,' and so securely had he drawn the deeds that it required an Act of Parliament to set them aside." In an evil hour this was done. The congregation whom Dr. Jones gathered round him were devotedly attached to the cause of

* Parker Mss., Presb. of Arbroath.

† Disr. Memories, pp. 257-8.

evangelism. It was not to be borne that when other chapels were raised to the status of parish churches, they should be left behind. A private Act of Parliament was got—an expensive proceeding—and the old chapel took its place with the rest, and shared their fate, falling into the hands of that party from which it had been the great wish of the foundress to preserve it. When the time came for the people to leave the building, round which many tender memories gathered, it turned out by a strange coincidence that the place was required for a railway station, and the church had to be swept away. Lady Glenorchy had been buried within the walls, and before they were actually pulled down, it was resolved to have the coffin lifted and removed to the new building which was to bear the name of Free Lady Glenorchy's. The incident has been graphically described by Hugh Miller, and by another gifted writer, who knew how to embalm in verse the impressions of such a scene. The following extracts will enable the reader to judge how this was done :—

"Is it night, or is it morning,
In the city's silent streets ?
Feebly strives the stagnant dawning
With the darkness which it meets.
Labour's self is scarce astir,—
Ghostly shows each living thing ;
Seems as day oppressed were
'Neath some evil angel's wing.

"Silence—silence—deep and lonely,
In the once resounding place ;
Here and there a dim lamp only
Shows and magnifies the space.
Oh ! the solemn recollections,
Clinging round the desert walls !
Oh ! the dear and deep affections,
Every hallowed spot recalls.

"But a hollow sound is ringing
On the pavement wide and bare ;
Manhood all his strength is bringing
To upheave the flagstones there.

* * * * *

'Few and sad a band is meeting
Here, where thousands met before;
Brief their speech, and still their greeting,
And their eyes are brimming o'er.
Clad as mourners for the dead,
Yet not theirs a kindred woe;—
Guardians of an honoured head,
Sepulchred long years ago.

"Now the ponderous stone is raised,-
Now the light hath flashed beneath,
And the living eye hath gazed
On the secret pomp of death!
Coronet and scutcheon there,
Gathering unseemly rust;
Heedfully the burden bear,—
Mouldering case of crumbling dust!

* * * * *

"My God, my Saviour! unto Thee
This my humble gift is given;
Work Thy goodwill in it—in me,
And make it as the porch of Heaven!
Thus prayed, with many an instant prayer,
One of Jehovah's chosen few;
Not many such on earth there are,
For she was wise and noble too!

"And when, ere life's brief prime was o'er,
She bowed in death her gracious head,
'Lay me within that Chapel floor—
I shall sleep sweetly there,' she said!
They scooped the rock—they graved the stone—
They laid her body down to rest;
And thousands were bereaved for one
So early called,—so early blessed.

"But still that lady's prayer was heard,
And still the showers of blessing fell,
And rich the increase of the Word,
Within the House she loved so well.
And one whom she had planted there
In youth's strong promise, stood and fed
Her people, with his snow white hair
A crown of glory round his head.

* * * * *

"Often threatened, often taunted,
Week by week they met once more;
It may be their foes were daunted
By the dust beneath the floor;
But at length the summons came.

* * * * *

"Tears were shed, and hearts were breaking,
With a grief no tears can tell;
Life-long memories were waking,
In that brief but last farewell.
Winter's snows were falling fast,
Some were old, and many poor;
Forth the congregation passed,
And oppression barred the door.

"Silence—silence—lonely—deep,
In the desecrated spot;
They have seized who cannot keep:
Is the prayer of faith forgot?

* * * * *

"Pass we on, the mist is breaking,
Gloom and darkness roll away;
Each the precious burden taking
Bears the coffin on its way." †

† *Witness* newspaper, 29th January, 1845.

XXXV. The Missionaries.

At the Disruption, the Church had a staff of twenty Missionaries employed in the foreign field among Jews and Gentiles, and it was a question of deep interest how they would act after the great breach had taken place. The Church which sent them out had been broken in two—to which of the sections would they adhere as the true Church of Scotland?

They were men of no common mental gifts. Dr. Duff at Calcutta, and Dr. Wilson at Bombay, had made their influence felt among all classes of Indian society. Not only on religious questions, but on much else that concerned the welfare of our Indian Empire, their advice had been sought for and valued by the highest Government authorities.

It need not be said that in spiritual earnestness and devotedness they were among the most eminent of the ministry, and, in that respect, were specially fitted to deal with the question of the Disruption. Was it, as some alleged, merely a debateable point of Church politics; or was it, as the Evangelical party maintained, a spiritual principle of vital moment to the cause of Christ? Looking to the missionaries, where were men to be found who could bring to bear on the points at issue such intellectual power, combined with such spiritual discernment?

In other respects also, their position was favourable. Having gone out into a wider world beyond Scotland, they might be supposed to have got free from much narrowness of view. Mingling with men of other churches and nationalities in the mission-field, and looking on from a distance with wider sympathies, they could better judge the relative importance of the questions in debate.

And they had the great advantage of having taken no part

in the strife. Their delicacy in this respect, indeed, had led to a degree of reticence which was almost excessive ; but when reproached for it by those who could not enter into their feelings, Dr. Duff replied that, as a missionary, he held himself to represent the whole Church both of the majority and minority. He had no right to make himself a partisan on either side, and, as long as he could, he was resolved to ignore the existence of the conflict. Calmly looking on from a distance, the missionaries were thus in the best position for making up their minds.

In one respect, they had the strongest inducement to avoid the Free Church and adhere to the Establishment.

Ominous warnings reached them in the spring of 1843, not only from the Moderates, but from members of the Evangelical party, assuring them that the Free Church would have a hard struggle for bare existence at home, and the support of foreign missions would be impossible. These declarations were "very strong and baffling," Dr. Duff says (Life, ii. p. 44). To join the Free Church was not only to risk their whole means of subsistence, but they were threatened with the overthrow of that noble work, so full of promise, to which they had given their lives.

The first to decide were the missionaries to the Jews. Cordially and unanimously they resolved to adhere to the Free Church ; one of their number, the Rev. W. Wingate, remarking that "the Church of Scotland never looked so like the Church of Scotland since her Confession and Standards were compiled."* But, while the Free Church got all the men and the missions, she lost all the money. There was a sum in the exchequer amounting to £3500, and an attempt was made to have it equitably divided, on the ground that it had been raised by both parties, and chiefly by those who were now members of the Free Church. It had, moreover, been given for the support of those individual men—the missionaries—actually in the field. But the Establishment would listen to no plea of equity. An appeal to law would have been vain. The result was, that the Establishment, with no missionaries to support, got all the money, while the Free Church, with an empty exchequer, had to support the men and

* *Miss. Record*, 1843, p. 44.

meet all the expenses of these missions. That is why the first missionary collection in the Free Church was in aid of the Jewish Mission. It yielded £3400, just the amount required for the first year.

The list of the Missionaries, and their stations at that time, were :—

Pesth, ...	John Duncan, D.D.
	William Wingate.
	Robert Smith, A.M.
	Assisted by Alexander S. T. Saphir,
	Frederick Tm. Neuhaus.
Jassy, ...	Daniel Edward.
	Assisted by Herman Phillip.
Constantinople, .	C. Schwartz.
Syria, ...	William Owen Allan.

But it was the decision of the missionaries in India that excited the deepest interest, both the Churches in Scotland eagerly awaiting the result.* The first to respond was perhaps the most learned of that devoted band—Dr. Wilson, of Bombay. He was returning to Scotland on furlough, and was making his way through Egypt when the Disruption took place. No time was lost by him in resigning his position, and sending in his cordial adherence to the Free Church.

In India, it was the month of July before the mail arrived bringing the intelligence of what had taken place in Scotland, along with formal offers from each of the Churches. The response at once given was a unanimous and joyful adherence of the whole staff to the Free Church. From Calcutta, Bombay, and Poonah resolutions were sent off, and reached Scotland in time to be reported at an early diet of the General Assembly sitting in Glasgow. That from Madras was awanting, owing to an untoward accident; but Dr. Gordon, the Convener, confidently foretold that the brethren there would take the same position.

* For full information the reader is referred to the able Biographies of Dr. Wilson and Dr. Duff by Dr. George Smith; also to the interesting account of Messrs. Anderson and Johnston, of Madras, by the Rev. J. Braidwood, M.A.

On 10th July their reply had been sent by the steamer *Memnon*, which was overtaken by a storm in the Red Sea and sunk on the 1st August. By the next mail, however, it was found that, though the Madras resolutions were the last to come, they were not the least cordial in their terms; and they were in time to be reported before the Assembly closed. A curious circumstance was the arrival of the original despatch some time afterwards. "A band of divers succeeded in recovering the mails; and the principal copy of the document, in a dilapidated state, was received on the 17th of November, after lying some months at the bottom of the sea. We need not add that it is carefully preserved." *

Thus, in the most decisive way, the views of the missionaries had been declared. The Establishment—look to what quarter she might—saw herself without the support of a single adherent in the whole field of missions, while one and all had rallied to the side of the Free Church. The Committee announced the result in the General Assembly with "unspeakable satisfaction, and, they trust, with a feeling of deep and devout gratitude to God." † It was the most encouraging event which took place in the early history of the Free Church.

But what enhanced its importance was the way in which the missionaries stated and enforced their views.

Dr. Duff indeed avows the severe struggle it cost him before he could decide. There were dear personal friends to be parted from, amidst feelings of mutual alienation; "and that heart must be colder and deader than mine which could contemplate without pain" such a result. There was much else which he speaks of as embittering the prospect. It tried his faith; but not for a moment was the result doubtful. "The question at issue was of vital moment," he said. "In early youth he had drunk in Free Church principles from 'The Cloud of Witnesses' and kindred works, and time and mature reflection had only strengthened the conviction of their truth and *paramount importance to the spiritual interests of man.*" There shone before him what he describes as "the blazing apprehension of

* *Miss. Record*, 1843, p. 116.

† Ass. Proc., Glas., p. 11, 12.

the truth and reality of the principles at issue," as "revealed in Jehovah's infallible oracles," and "embodied in the constitution and history of the Church of Scotland." "How could I decide otherwise than I have done?" *

In terms not less emphatic did his brethren state their views; and taking into account the whole circumstances of their position, it was beyond all question the most signal testimony which could have been borne in favour of the Free Church and her principles. Their names and stations were—

Calcutta	Alexander Duff, D.D.
,,	William Sinclair Mackay.
,,	David Ewart.
,,	John Macdonald.
,,	Thomas Smith.
Bombay	John Wilson, D.D.
,,	Robert Nisbet.
,,	J. Murray Mitchell.
Poonah	James Mitchell.
Madras	John Anderson.
,,	Robert Johnstone.
,,	John Braidwood.
Ghospara	Mahendra Lul Basack, native Catechist, Khorlas.

It is painful to refer to the questions which arose as to the future arrangements of the mission.

Nothing could be more undesirable than to set up rival institutions in view of the heathen populations of India, and have the controversy which had rent asunder the Presbyterianism of Scotland fought over again on the banks of the Ganges. If this was to be avoided, either Dr. Duff must leave Calcutta, or the Scottish Establishment must seek elsewhere to break new ground.

As to the idea of Dr. Duff and his colleagues leaving Calcutta, it must have been difficult even for the boldest opponent to propose such a thing in the religious circles of that city. The other missionaries belonging to all different denominations—Episcopalians, Independents, American Presbyterians, Baptists

* Explanatory Statement, &c., by the Rev. A. Duff, D.D., Edinburgh, 1844.

—rose as one man to remonstrate. The whole Christian community would have cried shame if it had been really attempted to part him from the many hundreds of the native youth of Calcutta, whom he had gathered round him, and who looked to him as their father.

Might not the Scottish Establishment then—the question arose—seek new openings for the new men whom they were to appoint? There was a noble field for missionary effort, Dr. Duff suggested, lying unoccupied in the once imperial cities of Agra and Delhi. India was surely wide enough to give scope for the energies of both Churches, without their sitting down in open rivalry and collision with each other.

The feeling of partisanship, however, was keen at the time, both in Calcutta and at home; and it was resolved to expel Dr. Duff and his colleagues from the Institution, and wrest the whole missionary property from his hands. By force of law it could be done, but it was a strong step to take. The buildings were of his planning. He had toiled hard by correspondence and personal application among his friends to raise the funds. The erection of the institution was as really his work as if with his own hands he had built it. Sums of money given to himself for the use of his family he had at different times laid out on it. The fair thing would have been to let him remain in possession, the Committee of the Established Church receiving compensation for such claims as they might have. If, on the other hand, they felt bound to take possession, ought they not, as honourable Christian men, to have made some return to Dr. Duff and his friends?

The Committee in Edinburgh, however, and the representatives of the Establishment in Calcutta, had other views. Technically they had the law on their side, and disregarding all claims of equity between man and man, they decided that Dr. Duff and the other missionaries must be simply expelled.

It was a painful scene. "On Saturday morning, 9th March, 1844, an official appeared, and I delivered up to him," Dr. Duff says, "the keys of the Institution, dwelling-house, and other premises, leaving behind library, apparatus—everything down to the minutest atom that could by the most microscopic ingenuity

be claimed by our friends of the Establishment." "Our sensations on leaving a place so endeared to us by labours and trials and hallowed associations, it were vain for me to attempt to describe."*

At Bombay there had been a similar transaction. For long years the missionaries had toiled in confined, overcrowded rooms, and new buildings were nearly finished, which they had striven hard to raise, by the help of friends. With the simple confidence of an honourable mind, Dr. Wilson was sure the Establishment would make an equitable arrangement, and let him have them on receiving compensation. He was soon undeceived. Not only was the house they had built taken possession of, but a German agent appeared demanding the library and scientific apparatus, the fruit of their own and their friends' generosity, property to the value of £8000. Quietly and calmly, "as Christian gentlemen," they gave it up without compensation; and in after days they were none the less ready to do kind service to the Institution which had so used them.

Some of the subscribers, however, could not refrain from expressing what they felt. Dr. Smyttan, who had given £200, wrote the Committee stating that he knew almost all the contributors —that nine-tenths of them, like himself, never thought of the Established Church of Scotland. It was these men—Dr. Wilson, Dr. Murray Mitchell, and the other missionaries—whom they wished personally to aid in their work, and it would be a deep disappointment to see the buildings wrested from the individual missionaries, the very men for whom they had been expressly intended. To such considerations, however, the members of the Establishment were impervious.

At Madras the buildings were rented, and there was a Missionary Board in which men of all religious denominations united to provide the local expenses. This they continued to do after the Disruption, as before. They had, however, £500 on hand in 1843, and offered by public advertisement to repay any subscription which might be asked back, an example of fair dealing which deserves notice in contrast to the above. Not a single subscription was withdrawn.

* *Record*, July, 1844, p. 179.

Thus the mission property in Calcutta and Bombay was lost, no single fragment being saved out of the wreck. But the faith under which the missionaries acted, did not fail to bring the promised blessing. Across the Atlantic, it occurred to an American merchant, Mr. Lennox, of New York, that they must be in difficulties, and at once he and his sisters remitted to Dr. Duff a sum of £500. Before it arrived, a physician in Calcutta, the well-known Dr. Simon Nicolson, handed over £500, and told Dr. Duff to let him know when he wanted more. One young officer sent £83 "donation batta" which he had just received, and another, £100 which had come in the same way; and so the money came pouring in from many a generous friend whose heart the Lord had opened. A single incident will show the spirit in which it was received. When that sum of £500 arrived from New York, Dr. Duff set apart a proportion of it for Madras, as well as for Calcutta and Bombay. Mr. Anderson at once replied, "I felt the moment I got your letter that we could not take it. We are not the less grateful to Mr. Lennox and his sisters, but your necessities are more pressing than ours. Give us your prayers, and keep the money; we have enough, my brother—what is that between thee and us?" "A finer example," Dr. Duff records, "of the genuine spirit of Christian brotherhood cannot well be conceived."*

Men animated by such principles could not fail of success. It was on 9th March, 1844, as we have seen, that Dr. Duff and his colleagues were expelled from the premises; scholars and teachers, including the whole *personnel* of the mission, being turned out. Ten months after he is able to say — 4th January, 1845—"All things have prospered with us; we have a more capacious edifice for our operations than before; the pecuniary resources have been adequate; the attendance of pupils—1257—has been great beyond any former precedent, and the organic workings of the system have been carried on throughout all departments with new life and renovated vigour. Our Institution, as a Free Church one, instead of falling behind, has already started considerably in advance of its former self."†

* *Miss. Record*, 1844, p. 295.

† *Ibid.* 1845, p. 59.

This estimate was fully confirmed by the unanimous testimony of the newspaper press at the annual examination.

Connected with all this there are many interesting details which we must not attempt to record, but one incident may be given as an example of many others.

The loss of his scientific apparatus and library was one of the sacrifices Dr. Duff most keenly felt. Personally he had brought it together by his own contributions and those of his friends. It had been in his hands of the highest value in the religious training of the Hindoo youth, and it was with some soreness of feeling he saw himself deprived of it.

Within a few days, however, after it became known, a noble beginning, as he calls it, was made; 1100 volumes were sent in as the commencement of a new library, and to his special delight, a medical friend, Dr. Stewart, a son of the Manse, and like himself a native of Moulin, presented him with a ten feet telescope, "one of the finest instruments of the kind in existence." *

This good beginning required to be followed up, and the work fortunately fell into good hands. "A gentleman"—Mr. Arthur Fraser—"visits Dr. Duff's school in Calcutta, sees 1250 Hindoo scholars, hears the Doctor lament the loss of books and apparatus, and then writes to his sister, a lady, we believe, in the North—"Could not you ladies, who are so good at begging, set to work and get up a subscription, and send him the amount to purchase books and apparatus?" The simple suggestion was enough. The ladies went to work as their manner is; the subscription lists rapidly filled;† the £1000 required was remitted to Dr. Duff, and soon, a reply was received warmly acknowledging the gift, in one of the most vehement outpourings of thanks that ever came even from his pen.

It is strange to observe how soon the views of the Church began to enlarge. Before Dr. Wilson reached the shores of Scotland he wrote, "We must begin anew by resolving to extend our operations,"‡ and Dr. Gordon, at the Glasgow Assembly, announced, five months after the Disruption, that

* *Record*, July, 1844, p. 179. † *Witness*, 8th February, 1845.
‡ Life, p. 387.

the Church could not dream of resting satisfied with upholding the missions as already established. By the very success which God vouchsafes to her efforts, He will compel her to make still greater exertions.*

The first step was the opening of a new mission at Nagpore. A distinguished Madras officer, Sir William Hill, had lost his wife by death, and, in accordance with her dying wish, had devoted her fortune, with a contribution (£500) from himself, to the founding of a mission at that station, where the last year of her life had been spent. Though himself an Episcopalian, he put the matter into the hands of Dr. Wilson. This was in the spring of 1842, but Dr. Brunton, on the part of the Established Church, refused to undertake the responsibility in the midst of the Disruption controversy. No sooner, however, were Dr. Gordon and his committee free to act, than the offer thus made by the member of another church, in circumstances so touching and in favour of the capital of the great central province of India, was felt to be irresistible. The Church, while holding her position with increased strength at Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, obeyed the call to "go forward." Mr. Stephen Hislop, "a man after Dr. Wilson's own heart," was sent out, and a commanding position in the centre of the vast continent was taken possession of, by one who ere long showed himself worthy to be "ranked with Duff, and Wilson, and Anderson, as the fourth founder of Scottish missions to India."

Hardly was this step resolved on when a new proposal was made to add another continent to the field of missionary operations. For more than twenty years there had been in Glasgow a Missionary Society, whose sphere of work was in South Africa, at stations the very names of which—Lovedale, Burnshill, Macfarlan—recall the venerated men by whom the mission was begun and sustained. In 1843 the staff consisted of six missionaries, and a still larger number of female teachers and native assistants; and hardly had the Disruption taken place, when the Society proposed to dissolve itself and hand over the whole agency and property to the Free Church. The offer was one which it was impossible to refuse. With the cordial

* *Record*, July, 1844, pp. 180, 181.

acquiescence of the missionaries the agreement was made, and the African Mission engrafted on the Foreign Mission Scheme of the Free Church. There were some who felt anxious as the burdens on the funds began thus to multiply; yet it was noble work for the Church to be diffusing the light of education and saving knowledge amidst the heathenism of the "dark continent," and it was encouraging to find with how cordial a welcome the change was hailed at the mission stations themselves. When the news reached Caffraria, a meeting of the native Christians was held, with a Caffre chief in the chair, and subscriptions for the Free Church set on foot. The contributions being given in kind had to be disposed of, and the result was that a sum of £180 was sent to Scotland as a free-will offering of first-fruits from this portion of the mission field. *

Thus, from the first, the desire was to enter in at the open doors which God in His providence set before the Church. How this process of enlargement went on in the years that followed, it is not for us here to tell.

But while the mission field thus grew wider, there were manifest tokens of blessing on the ground already occupied. The funds were more than sustained, and spiritual fruit began to appear.

The great cause of regret hitherto had been the small proportion of conversions and baptisms; but it almost seemed as if the Disruption, in this respect, had brought a time of blessing. Hardly had the Institution removed to its new quarters in Calcutta when a highly-educated Hindoo youth applied for baptism. In the course of the year another and another, young men of good position, followed, till the Hindoo community took alarm. A feeling of hostility was roused, in which the "rank, wealth, and power of the native community" took part. Still conversions went on, and the tumult got worse. A great anti-missionary—or, rather, anti-Free-Church-Institution—movement was entered on. A Hindoo society for the protection of their religion was formed. Dr. Duff's house was besieged, Some of the most violent resolved to take what they considered the most effectual way of getting rid of these conversions by

* Ass. Proc., 1845, p. 214.

getting rid of Dr. Duff. He was warned that "a body of ruffians of the baser sort" had been hired to assault him, and entreated not to expose himself by going out at night, and never to return home by the same road by which he had gone.*

All this was full of encouragement. None of those things moved him. The mission work was at last telling. A blessing was on it; and very thankfully was this fact acknowledged by one of his colleagues, Mr. Mackay, at the Inverness Assembly in 1845. There were, he said, twenty-two native Christians in Calcutta, the fruits of their mission, now forming the nucleus of a native Christian Church. I do not, he added, wish to attach undue weight to it, but "surely it is a striking fact, and, I trust, a token for good, that of the twenty-two now in Calcutta no less than eighteen have been added to the Church since the Disruption." God had blessed to them that momentous event. Friends had been raised up; good men of other denominations joined them; funds [local] had poured in to tenfold their usual amount.† Their adherence had drawn on them the favourable notice of the Church at home, and won for them a warm interest in their prayers. "And to this outpouring of prayer on our behalf I do not hesitate to ascribe, under God, the success which has lately attended us."‡

While the field was thus widening and becoming more prosperous abroad, it was an anxious question how the Church at home could bear the burden. Numerous poor congregations all over Scotland were oppressed by money difficulties. The demands on all sides were unexampled. How in the midst of such a struggle could increasing funds be looked for to meet their increasing liabilities? The result fairly took men by surprise.

To show the state of the facts, perhaps the best way will be to take what was done for all missionary objects during the six years before the Disruption, while the Church was yet unbroken, and compare it with the six years of the Free Church after the Disruption.§

* Life, ii. 69. † Ass. Proc., Inverness, p. 26.

‡ Within two years the sum raised in Bengal was upwards of £6000.—*Ibid.* p. 27. § Assembly Proceedings, 1849, p. 18.

In the Established Church, while yet unbroken, there was contributed for all the missionary schemes—

In 1837,	£10,070
„ 1838,	13,800
„ 1839,	14,353
„ 1840,	16,156
„ 1841,	17,588
„ 1842,	20,191
	£98,158

In the Free Church, after the Disruption, there was contributed for missionary schemes—

In 1843-4,	£23,874
„ 1844-5,	35,526
„ 1845-6,	43,310
„ 1846-7,	43,327
„ 1847-8,	47,568
„ 1848-9,	49,214
	£242,819

Annual Average in United Church, before the Disruption, £16,359
„ „ in Free Church, after the Disruption, . 40,469

It was impossible to avoid the feeling that God had touched the hearts of His people. It was a surprise to themselves to see what they were able to do; and both the missionaries abroad and the Church at home might well thank God and take courage.

XXXVI. Pledges Unfulfilled.

In contrast to the unanimous adherence of the Missionaries we must now allude to those ministers in Scotland who, after publicly pledging themselves, failed in the day of trial.* Their conduct requires to be noticed because of the keen feeling which it excited at the time, and because the favour which many of them received within the Establishment seriously affected the relation of the two Churches to each other.

When the Convocation met in November, 1842, the first step taken, was to pass resolutions laying down the conditions absolutely necessary, if the Church was to continue in connection with the State.

Upwards of 500 ministers voted for, or signed, these resolutions; and, of these, there were 61 who, after Government refused their terms, still kept their places in the Establishment.

There was a second and stronger series of resolutions signed by 474, in which they distinctly pledged themselves, in express terms before the public, to resign their livings; and, of these, there were 29 who, when put to the proof, forgot their pledges and retained their parishes.

It would have been marvellous if nothing of the kind had occurred. In an assembly of so many hundreds, there were sure to be some timid men who were not able to face the danger when it actually came. Some were known to be in debt, and creditors bore hard on them; some were in feeble health—one especially, in the West, was sinking into the grave.†

* In this section, for obvious reasons, no names will be given nor authorities quoted through which the names can be traced.

† There were cases, however, as we have seen, in which this did not shake their resolution. An additional example may here be

Even when there were no such difficulties, the trial in itself, as many could tell, was severe. Dr. Guthrie gives us a glimpse of two cases which he met with immediately before the Disruption: "A minister in a certain district of country said to me—'You think there is no chance of a settlement.' 'No,' said I, 'we are as certain of being out as that the sun will rise to-morrow.' I was struck by something like a groan, which came from the very heart of the mother of the family. They had had many trials; there had been cradles and coffins in that home. There was not a flower, or a shrub, or a tree, but was dear to them. Some of them were planted by the hands of those who were in their graves. That woman's heart was like to break."

"In another locality there was a venerable mother who had gone to the place when it was a wilderness, but who, with her husband, had turned it into an Eden. Her husband had died there. Her son was now the minister. This venerable woman was above eighty years of age. Yes, and I never felt more disposed to give up my work [advocating the cause of the Disruption] than in that house. I could contemplate the children being driven from their home, but when I looked upon that venerable widow and mother, with the snows and sorrows of eighty years upon her head, and saw her anxiety about two things—viz., that Lord Aberdeen should bring in a bill to settle the question, but her anxiety, at the same time, that if he did not bring in a satisfactory measure, her son should do his duty, I could not but feel that it was something like a cruel work to tear out such a venerable tree—to tear her away from the house that was dearest to her upon earth."*

Another example refers to a later period, but is hardly less striking. "I remember," said Dr. Guthrie, "passing a manse on a moonlight night with a minister who had left it for the cause of truth. No light shone from the house, and no smoke rose.

given :—The Rev. D. Davidson, of Broughty-Ferry, after years of failing health, died, 25th August, 1843; "one of his last acts being the appending of his name to the Deed of Demission."—Parker Mss.

* Memoir of Dr. Guthrie, ii. p. 70.

Pointing to it in the moonlight, I said, 'Oh! my friend, it was a noble thing to leave that manse.' 'Ah, yes!' he replied; 'but for all that it was a bitter thing. I shall never forget the night I left that house, till I am laid in the grave. When I saw my wife and children go forth in the 'gloaming'—when I saw them for the last time leave our own door; and when, in the dark, I was left alone with none but my God, and when I had to take water to quench the fire on my own hearth, and put out the candle in my own house, and turn the key against myself, and my wife and my little ones, I bless God for the grace which was given me; but may He in His mercy grant that such a night I may never see again." *

Surely, in the view of those and similar cases, every one must feel how little cause there is, without discrimination, to judge severely those men whose faith was not equal to such a trial.

Sometimes the results were deeply to be regretted on account of the men themselves. "The Rev. Mr. —— was minister of ——, a member of the Convocation, and pledged to all that had been agreed to in that great assemblage. A man of amiable character, who had always followed with those who fought in our great battle, he was generally held in high esteem. . . . Under what influence no one was able to say, but fail us, when the crash came, poor —— did. All who knew him mourned over it, chiefly for his own sake. He never was to his old friends or to society what he had been. It was said to have affected his health. However that might be, he did not long survive our Disruption. We all believed that a happier man he would have been had he continued with us. Some men there were, at the era of the catastrophe, whose defection was not less—perhaps was more—inconsistent and blameworthy than that of this man of quiet spirit; but these men were made of grosser material than he, and could withstand without shrinking, as he could not, the silent contempt of what some might call a harshly-judging world."

It was the latter more obtrusive class whose conduct and bearing were felt by the public to be offensive. The remark-

* Memoir of Dr. Guthrie, ii. p. 85.

able thing was that, during the earlier stages of the conflict, many of them had been the most extreme in their views and violent in their language. One, who belonged to a Presbytery in the West, objected to the resolutions of the Convocation as too temperately worded. Another, in Perthshire, used to denounce the Moderates, and denounce his brethren who had any intercourse with them. A third, in one of our larger towns, had "outshone all his brethren by his intemperate zeal and violent denunciations of the Court of Session and of the ministers who yielded to it. Indeed, his brethren at public meetings had sometimes to disclaim any sympathy with the bitter expressions he made use of." When such men broke their pledges, remained in the Establishment, and got promotion, it was natural that some keenness of feeling should be called forth.

In coming down from the high ground which they had taken, there was a strange variety in the ways by which they effected their retreat.

There was a Doctor of Divinity in the West, who held anti-patronage views, and was a decided member of the Evangelical party, but his theory was that after the passing of the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, the favour of God was necessarily withdrawn from us. Even measures which he would otherwise have approved of would now be no blessings. He would have nothing to do with the resolutions of the Convocation, or with leaving the Establishment.

A minister in the Western Highlands, who was deeply pledged, intimated to his people, the first Sabbath after the Disruption, that he would *take a few days* to think over the matter. Then he was asked to stay in till after the communion. Then, he simply stayed in altogether.

Another, who at the Convocation had adhered to both series of resolutions, continued steadfast till within a few weeks of the Disruption, when he got new views as to "the two witnesses" in the Book of Revelation, which, he thought, made it imperative on him to stay in the Establishment.

In the North, there was a parish minister who had "made a flaming and ultra profession,"—not only going all lengths with

the Convocation, but taking active steps to prepare his people for the Disruption. He came to the Assembly of 1843 ; did not, however, sign the deed of demission, but published a letter saying he intended to remain in the Establishment "for a time at least." On returning home, he got such a reception from his people that he turned and set off again for Edinburgh for the purpose of resigning. Somehow, he stopped by the way.

In one of our manufacturing towns, there was a steady supporter of the Evangelical party, who went still further. He was a member of the Convocation. After the Disruption, he applied to the Assembly at Tanfield, and was received into the Free Church—preached for one Sabbath to those of his people whom he led out of the Establishment—then quietly turned, went back, and left them.

It was difficult to know how the men who had broken their pledges, should be treated in the private intercourse of life. "During the Ten Years' Conflict," said the late Mr. Grant of Ayr, "twenty-two ministers of the Presbytery had voted with the Evangelical party. When the day of trial came, only eleven of these joined the Free Church. The case of one who drew back was remarkable. He had formed an association to collect for the Sustentation Fund, and had obtained from the proprietor a site for his church, which, by his own selection, was directly opposite the parish church. He went to Edinburgh to the Assembly with the avowed intention of leaving the Establishment, but failed to do so. I do not mention his name, as he has recently passed beyond the judgment of men."

"With those eleven who drew back in the day of battle I am not aware that I ever afterwards exchanged as much as one word. Indeed, I do not remember that they ever gave me the opportunity of doing so. But with the eleven who continued to be what they had always professed themselves to be—consistent Moderates—I remained on a footing of mutual courtesy and kindly feeling, and with none more so than with Dr. Auld, the clerk of the Presbytery."

Meetings with the former class, however, could not always be avoided. Mr. Milne, of Perth, "conversing one day with a minister before the Disruption, and finding that notwithstanding

former professions he was resolved to keep hold of the Establishment, turned suddenly round upon him and said—'I see how it is. You are just like Issachar. You see that the land is pleasant, and rest is good, and so you are about to bow your shoulder to bear.'"

After the Disruption, Mr. Martin, of Bathgate, "continued to meet on friendly terms those he had been accustomed to oppose; but his attitude to others who, under 'shameful pretences, had renounced their principles,' was different. Public morality demanded a testimony against them. An incident which occurred in the house of one of the landed proprietors of the district illustrates this. One of the latter class being ushered into the drawing-room, where Mr. Martin was with the lady of the house, walked hastily towards him with a fawning look, and an 'O Mr. Martin'—on his lips. When he had come near him, Mr. Martin turned round on his heel, and walked away in silence to another part of the room."

The feelings of the laity were often expressed in a way not less decided. An extensive landed proprietor in the West was remonstrated with by a neighbouring country gentleman for having said that on no account would he ever again hear Mr. —— preach. His reply was—'You and I were once members of the Jockey Club. Now, if any of us had acted as Mr. —— has acted would he not have been expelled?' 'Certainly he would.' 'Well, then, how can you expect me to hear Mr. —— preach?'"

The thing sometimes took a ludicrous turn. "One of these men, near Edinburgh, big talking, had publicly declared that, for his principles, he would lay his head on the block as calmly as ever he laid it on his pillow. But when the Free Church ministers left their houses he sat still in his. Local waggery took its joke. On a summer morning, as the minister stepped out to take his delight in his garden, just before his door there stood an axe and a block. What thoughts he had at the sight of the grim pair he did not divulge."*

"I heard the other day," said Dr. Guthrie, "of a minister who had come with us to the very verge of the Disruption, who had

* Life of Dr. Cunningham, p. 194.

actually obtained a site for a church and manse, but who when the Disruption came remained where he was. The gentleman who gave him the site was riding one day in a narrow lane when he saw the minister approaching. The gentleman, of course, felt rather uncomfortable at the prospect of the meeting. He wondered what he would say, but to his great surprise, as he approached him, his old friend went over the hedge like an antelope—cleared it at a bound—and was in a moment out of sight. My friend, of course, expected to see him run across the field, but no, he had vanished. So, when he came to the spot where the minister had disappeared, he drew his horse gently close to the hedge, and, looking over,—there he beheld him, squat like a hare in a furrow."

Sometimes in such incidents the serious was mixed with the ludicrous. At —— in the North, the successor appointed was "the Rev. Mr. ——, of Disruption notoriety. He had no difficulty in signing the deed of demission, and, Jehu-like to mark his zeal, he subjoined to his name, 'Please take notice that I am the father of four children.' After spending two or three weeks in different districts, in preaching up the principles of the Free Church and preaching down those of the Establishment, he suddenly stopped short, exclaiming 'Peccavi,' expressing the deepest repentance, and praying to get back to the Established Church. . . .

"Though he had been several weeks in the parish, I had not seen him. At length, however, we met on the high road, and the meeting had nearly proved memorable to him. I had been visiting a family at a distant village, and on leaving, the person accompanied me. As we walked slowly along, I observed a person dressed in black clothes coming meeting us, and I asked my companion who this was just before us. He said he did not know, unless that it might be a traveller at the village on business. I had my pony by the bridle, but presently, as the stranger came close up, it reared up in his face and attempted to strike him down with its fore feet. Fortunately, by leaping aside, he escaped. . . . I felt amazed, and turned to apologise, but he made off, knowing, as I afterwards understood, who I was, although I did not know him. Never having seen the pony act

in this way before, although I had ridden it for fifteen years, I began to chastise it, saying to my companion how vexed I was for such an attack. Several people in the village witnessed what had happened, and immediately a report was circulated that the minister's pony had tried to kill the Moderate. This report furnished the first tidings I had, as to who the person was upon whom my pony had made such a determined assault, as if it knew the person who had dispossessed it of its former residence."

In the districts of the country where such cases occurred, the results were in some respects to be deeply regretted. It had been said by Dr. Chalmers, that if the 470 ministers who signalised themselves as supporters of Free Church principles had turned round when they saw their emoluments threatened, a Church containing hundreds of men who thus had trampled on what they professed, would have scandalised the community.* Thanks to the steadfastness of the great majority, the country was spared such a spectacle; and thanks to those others who had modestly kept in the background, but who stood forward in the hour of danger, there was hardly a vacancy in the ranks!

But in the parishes of those who did draw back, the effect could not fail to be prejudicial to themselves, and to the cause of religion. The subject is painful, and our extracts must be brief.

Sometimes the people were outspoken. One of the ministers already referred to in this section had been promoted to a desirable parish, and set about "courting the acquaintance" of his parishioners in various ways. "At times he might be seen in the public road addressing all and sundry, and offering his snuff-box. This practice was easily seen through, and duly appreciated by the sharp people he had to deal with. One day, when in this mood, he met a very sagacious old man, and, shaking hands, asked him how he was. 'Very well,' said the man, 'but I do not know who is speaking to me.' 'Oh!' said the minister, 'I am the bad man—droch duine—that lives in that house,' pointing to the parish manse. 'Well,' replied

* Report on Sites, iii. p. 137, q. 6446.

the other, 'many a bad man has got a good house in these times!'"

One of the outgoing ministers, after speaking of the deep injury which would have been inflicted on the cause of religion and morality if the Church had drawn back, adds, "I think I can already see clearly a hardening effect produced upon many of those who remain in the Establishment, to be traced, I believe, to nothing but the feeling engendered by sitting under the ministry of men whom they cannot but regard as not actuated by high-toned feeling and right principle—placing their own interest above the call of duty."

XXXVII. Disruption in England.

Few events in modern Scottish history have awakened such interest in other countries, as the Disruption of 1843. Even Englishmen began to ask what could have induced nearly 500 Scottish ministers to resign their livings. There were clamorous demands for information from various quarters, and the Free Church gladly responding to such appeals, sought, by deputations and otherwise, to make known the great principles for which she had contended.

Among the Presbyterians belonging to the English Synod, the event led to scenes second in excitement only to those which had taken place in the North. At the first meeting of the Presbytery of London, the Disruption repeated itself in miniature, with this difference that it was the Moderates who went out. Writing under date 14th June, 1843, Dr. Hamilton has described the circumstances:—"Yesterday, the Presbytery met —Blair in the chair. After sundry matters of business had been harmoniously settled, the call from Commercial Road came on. The Moderator, who had evidently received his instructions, said—'Mr. Ferguson, in the name of the Presbytery of London, in connection with the Established Church of Scotland, I ask you if you accept of this call.' Mr. Ferguson said—'I accept the call to be minister of that church.' Whereupon Mr. Burns, seconded by Dr. Brown, moved that the Presbytery proceed with the settlement. This was agreed to, and Mr. Lorimer was appointed to preside at the induction." Then the question arose as to whether it was to be in connection with the Scottish Establishment? The Moderator maintained that it must; Dr. Hamilton held that admission into this Presbytery did not imply the recognition of the Scottish Establishment,

for most of them were only waiting, in the altered circumstances, till their ecclesiastical superior, the Synod, should erase from its title any recognition of that Church. "However, as it was very plain that they meant to make a sinistrous use of the present designation of the Presbytery, it might simplify matters to alter it at once, which we were quite competent to do, the Presbytery having existed as a Presbytery before it entered into the Church of Scotland. It was accordingly moved that the words, 'in connection with the Established Church of Scotland,' be henceforth omitted in the designation of the Presbytery. The Moderator refused to put the motion, as being revolutionary and incompetent. Whereupon it was moved that the Moderator, having refused to discharge his duty, has lost the confidence of the Presbytery, and that Mr. Lorimer be appointed Moderator in his stead,—which motion was put by the Clerk, and carried; the Moderator not voting. This disconcerted the enemy a little, and in a sort of panic, Blair declared the Presbytery adjourned; and, amidst much outcry of the audience against its profanity, pronounced the blessing, on which the four ministers, with Stewart and Nicolson, elders, marched out, and Kay and the Woolwich elder, Rutherford, retired from the table. Their departure elicited a burst of hissing and derisive cheers from the audience, which was considerable. When they were gone, and our own Moderator was in the chair, after prayer, the business again proceeded. The motion to erase the words, 'in connection,' &c., was harmoniously agreed to; and after some further business, the Presbytery adjourned. We had thirty-four at the Presbytery dinner, and far the happiest evening we have spent there. The Moderates, before adjourning, forgot to fix a day and place for their next meeting, so that they are presbyterially defunct. Though my own wish was to stave off this disruption for a time; now that it is over, every one feels relieved and lightened. Our way was fenced with thorns, so that we had no alternative." *

It was unfortunate, certainly, for the Moderates, that they adjourned in such fashion as to render themselves presbyterially defunct; but there were other things which weakened their

* Life of Dr. Hamilton, p. 220.

hands. In Northumberland, a faithful minister, who stood to his post, and prevented the Establishment from seizing his church, says:—"I saw my neighbours running helter-skelter across to take parishes. These men are now (1874) all, or almost all, dead, some never having comfort in their charges, so far as I could hear. I walked out, on the 18th May, with the rest, and was on the platform with James Hamilton, James Nisbet, &c." *

When deputations were sent from Scotland, however, it was not so much with the English Presbyterians that they had to deal as with the general public. Dr. Guthrie, Dr. Cunningham, and Dr. H. Grey, made the first movement, giving addresses in London, Liverpool, and Manchester, where it is said they "found the highest enthusiasm prevailing in the cause of the Free Church." In the course of time, a whole series of deputations followed. All over England the leading towns were visited, and everywhere the ministers of the Free Church met with the most cordial welcome.

The most difficult class to deal with were the clergy and members of the Church of England. When Dr. Candlish went to Cambridge, he says:—"I got about 200 gownsmen to listen to both of my addresses with profound attention, and many of them with ardent earnestness." Objections were raised, but the ready tact of the great debater did not fail him. One of the University men said, since Dr. Candlish spoke so strongly of the rights of the Church, he would like to know what he understood by the Church? Dr. Candlish replied at once, "I accept, without qualification, the definition given in the Thirty-nine Articles." Another then said that he could not understand how the Free Church claimed to be the Church of Scotland, when they were separate from the State, and another Church was established. "I would reply to that," said Dr. Candlish, "by asking my friend another question. Where was the Church of England during the Commonwealth?" After this there was no farther interruption. How his addresses impressed the audience may be gathered from the description given in a local newspaper. "His voice falls at first slowly and harshly

* Disr. Mss. xliii. p. 4.

upon the ear; as he proceeds, however, it gathers force and volume. His slight figure seems to distend its proportions, his gesticulation becomes vehement, his utterance rapid, and his tones loud. His style of language rises as he proceeds, and the effect he produces upon his hearers is exhibited in the intense attention, broken only by loud and simultaneous bursts of applause, when the orator reaches the climax of his subject. His oratory is fascinating from its originality and wild fervour."*

In the meeting at Gravesend, two magistrates, members of the Church of England, were present, and, in consequence of subscribing to the fund, Dr. Begg tells how they were called to account, next Sabbath, by the rector of the parish, in a sermon in which he denounced them for encouraging schismatics in the North.†

And yet there were, even among zealous Churchmen, some warm supporters of Disruption principles. One of the most powerful speeches ever heard in defence of the Free Church, was that of the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, then of St. John's, Bedford Row. Another of the London clergy also—the Rev. Thos. Mortimer, B.D.—was not less earnest in his advocacy. "I have watched the Church of Scotland," he said, "with intense interest. I have wept over her manifold afflictions, and I do feel, most conscientiously, that the cause our Scottish brethren have espoused is the cause of God."

There was another movement, however, of a more private nature, which deserves notice, as having given special pleasure to Dr. Chalmers. It originated with a warm-hearted member of the Evangelical party of the Church—the Rev. John Hunter of Bath. Educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, he had served for a time at Watton, Herts, the parish of the well-known Rev. Edward Bickersteth, till compelled by ill health to retire. His whole sympathies were with the Free Church; and soon after the Disruption, he drew up a paper—pronounced by Dr. Chalmers to be "complete and faultless"—in which he pled the cause and appealed for subscriptions. One brief extract,

* Memorials of Dr. Candlish, p. 331.

† Blue Book, Glasgow, 1843, p. 88.

given below,* will show how the question of spiritual independence was stated by an English Churchman, and may interest the reader all the more that it is singled out for special commendation by Dr. Chalmers. "What I particularly like is your selection of the one point of jurisdiction to the exclusion of the other of non-intrusion." The circulation of this appeal drew forth most gratifying testimonies from the members of the Evangelical party in the Church. When the Free Church deputation visited Bath, five or six of these ministers solicited an interview, and one of them, says Dr. Begg, "opened one of our meetings with prayer." The appeal that had pleased Dr. Chalmers appeared to him also so excellent that, at the next meeting of the General Assembly, he read the greater part of it, adding, "I have seen the men from whom this document proceeds, and I never met with more amiable or Christianlike men."

But while English Churchmen, to some extent, gave their sympathy and support, it was among the Nonconformists that the real success of the movement was met with. "You have heard," said Dr. Begg, "that the Mayor of Manchester, an eminent British merchant, the Mayor of Birmingham, and the Mayor of Bath, all presided at our meetings, and all these gentlemen are members of the Independent denomination. We also found strenuous support from many eminent ministers of that body." So it was also among the Baptists. "In a word, all the men who held the fundamental truths of the Bible, more or less, came to our assistance." There was one denomination, however, which stood out beyond all others as the friends of the Free Church—the Wesleyan Methodists.

It is impossible to give here any detailed account of what was done in the different localities. Dr. Nathaniel Paterson, of Glasgow, and Mr. Buchan, of Hamilton, visited the North of

* "We feel that the claim of the civil court to enforce ordination to the ministry, *whether directly or indirectly*, under any possible circumstances, is an unjustifiable usurpation in a matter purely spiritual; and, consequently, we judge that those of our Northern brethren, who view the subject in the same light with ourselves, could not, as Christian men, do otherwise than resign their connection with the State."

England, and obtained, as the result of their different meetings, the sum of £1200. Two enthusiastic meetings were held in Manchester, and on the following Sabbath collections were made in thirty-five places of worship in the town, amounting to upwards of £4000.* These are examples of what was going on. During the first summer, it was stated that £20,000 was raised in aid of the Free Church, but greater things were expected. Mr. Bunting, the generous and large-hearted friend of the movement, proposed that a hundred pulpits† should be occupied in one day in London to "enforce those Bible principles on which we have taken our stand, and to obtain additional collections."

With these introductory notices, we now submit to the reader the statement of Mr. Burns, of Kirkliston, who, in 1843, was minister of London Wall Church, and was honoured to take a leading part in the work, in England.

* Report of Glasgow Assembly, 1843, p. 85. The above sum of £4000 must have included several large subscriptions given privately, and collections at the public meetings.

† *Ibid.* p. 90.

XXXVIII. London Reminiscences, 1843.

By the Rev. James C. Burns, Kirkliston.

Our modest "miniature" Disruption in the Presbytery of London took place within a month of the great event in Edinburgh. It might, and probably would have been warded off till the April following, when the Synod was indicted to meet at Liverpool, but for the circumstance that the induction of a minister (the Rev. James Ferguson) into a vacant charge made it necessary to determine in what sense the "formula" was to be understood, alike by the presiding minister in putting the questions prescribed by it, and by him in answering them. The point at issue was—"Is the Church of Scotland, *as by law established*," the *present* Establishment? or is it the Establishment as it was till the 18th of last month, *alias* the disestablished, "the Free Church of Scotland"? Though the Moderator refused to act, in taking a vote on the question thus raised, the Presbytery acted for itself, superseding him in his office, and resolving to obliterate from its title the words which up till that time had given it a *nominal* connection with the mother Church. This resolution—moved by Mr. Hamilton—and carried, was the *solution* of all our other controversies, and brought to a speedy end our collisions with the "moderate" brethren, which had, of late, not been few, for it relieved us at once of their company; in a very short time after the vote was declared, they rose simultaneously from their seats and departed. The only further "conflict" which took place was one of muscular *force* between the Clerk and one of the out-going minority (the most athletic of the number); the former tightly, though stealthily holding, the latter stoutly grasping at the Presbytery minute-book as it lay open on the table, with the result that it remained in possession of its lawful owners. Its brazen clasps saved it.

That was a truly happy event, making the day and the place memorable—the 13th of June 1843—in the Scots' Church at Woolwich. Among other spectators or participants of the scene, were General Anderson, R.A. (so well known in his later years in the Free Assembly), and Mr. Mure Macredie of Perceton, both of whom, by their genial presence and fellowship, helped to make our social meeting afterwards (as Mr. Hamilton testifies), "by far the happiest evening we had ever spent," in a Presbyterial capacity.

Though we thus "came out" in one sense, in another we "*staid in.*" We not only kept possession of the building in which we met, and of the book in which our proceedings were being recorded; we also kept our several churches,* and if we had had manses, would have kept them too, our experience in this respect widely differing from that of our dear brethren elsewhere, —the trial in our case, scarcely a trial at all. Not indeed, in some cases, was this accomplished without difficulty, arising from obsolete, inconvenient title-deeds and threatenings of ejectment founded thereon; but ultimately there wasn't a member of the Presbytery (as *now* constituted), who, besides retaining his people, did not succeed in retaining, or rescuing his place of worship also, with whatever of "possessions or goods" might belong to it! The *securest* of all our churches was the oldest, "the Scots' Church, London Wall." Fortunately for the peace of mind of its minister and congregation, it had a constitution, which, if the *quoad sacra* churches across the border had been equally fortunate and far-seeing, would probably have saved them, as it saved it, from the hand of the spoiler; being bound only to the "Westminster Confession of Faith," and "the *form of worship* commonly practised in the Church of Scotland!"

Numerically, no doubt, we suffered by the aforesaid secession. Three of the London congregations, with their ministers, left us; but what we lost in one direction, we gained in another. Our separation from them brought us into fellowship with all the Evangelical Churches around, from which we had in a great measure been excluded before. We were isolated no longer.

* It should, however, be mentioned that in the Provinces several churches were seized after much litigation—*e.g.*, Dr. Munro's at Manchester.

Though we had always been "Nonconformists" in fact, we were not regarded as such (except by the Establishment), so that our position between the two great parties of "Church and Dissent," was alike anomalous and difficult. We were disowned equally by both, and we were not strong enough to stand, or at least, to make ourselves visible as a denomination, alone.

The Disruption changed all that. We became a denomination, and instead of being stationary or stereotyped as hitherto, we began forthwith to multiply and grow—to break forth on the right hand and on the left. The six or seven charges which constituted the whole Presbytery, in 1843, (along with a similarly small number belonging to the "United Presbyterian Church," afterwards happily amalgamated with them), have now grown into upwards of seventy—twice as large a body as was the entire Synod in England up to that time.

Having neither church nor manse-buildings to look after, immediately, for ourselves, we were all the better situated for taking part in the great movement in that direction, which, by this time, had begun to stir all Scotland. We were ready to welcome the General Assembly's deputies when they came to us; to work with them, or to work for them. And there were not a few of us who did.

The first of those deputies were Dr. Henry Grey, Dr. Cunningham, and Dr. Guthrie; and their first meeting was held in the church at London Wall, as a sort of *feeler*, or pioneer to the great meeting, announced for the day following, in Exeter Hall,—its proximity to Lombard Street and the Bank of England being (as Dr. Guthrie jocularly remarked), one of its recommendations. Mr. Patrick Maxwell Stewart, M.P. for Renfrewshire, presided at the former, and the Marquis of Breadalbane at the latter. Both meetings were successful, to a wish; and those three distinguished men never appeared to more advantage, or spoke with better effect, than they did on both occasions. The enthusiasm evoked was wonderful,—scarcely less, or less unmistakable, than that of similar gatherings in Scotland;—"liberal things" were both devised and done (several large, surprisingly large, contributions being intimated in course of the proceedings); and such was the demand for the services of the Deputies in

addressing meetings elsewhere, everywhere, that a systematic movement for pervading London, and gathering in the offered contributions of the several churches, became as necessary as it was desirable.

A committee accordingly was formed, to act in concert with another formed about the same time in Manchester; and, between the two, arrangements were speedily made with the Home authorities for sending deputies from Scotland, not only to these great cities, but to every considerable town in England, wherever there was an open door. Of the London committee, the most active member undoubtedly was good James Nisbet, of Berners Street, Oxford Street, who threw his whole energies into it, and gave it most of his time, heading the subscription list, besides, with £1000;—his brother elders, Messrs. William Hamilton and Alexander Gillespie, likewise doing their part nobly, as in all good causes they were wont to do. Our place of business was the back parlour in Berners Street, where all letters were received and answered,—and where the secretaries, of whom, along with "the well-beloved" James Hamilton, I had the honour to be one, held themselves in readiness to meet with whoever might come to get information, to arrange for pulpit supply, or to offer help. Many a pleasant hour was spent in that quiet committee-room, and the work done there was much more than its own reward, by the substantial results of it. One of our most distinguished visitors was the late Countess of Effingham, and it was in consequence of the information we were able to give her respecting certain needy and deserving congregations in Scotland, about which she made inquiry, that she selected them as the objects of her thoughtful and munificent liberality. At most of the district meetings held in London, her ladyship was present; at that in Surrey Chapel, where Dr. Begg was the "chief speaker," offering her services as a "deaconess" or collector. For a time, also, it should be mentioned, a room was hired in Exeter Hall, as being more central, and there the two committees carried on the work together.

But before saying more about London, I am happy to be able to report on the doings of the committee at Manchester, on the authority, and in the words of the one man who, more

than all other men, laboured in our cause *there*, and contributed to the success of it,—he being neither a Scotchman nor a Presbyterian—viz., Mr. Percival Bunting, then practising as a Solicitor, who still, though no longer resident in Manchester, happily survives. He has favoured me with some of his "Reminiscences" both of what was done in England *before* the Disruption, with a view to the enlightenment of the English public on the great question at issue, and also of what was done afterwards in the way of evoking the sympathy and the "siller" of the Christian people. On the former of these subjects this is what he says:—

"During the Ten Years' Conflict successive deputations visited London with the view of influencing Parliament or Administrations in favour of the Evangelical party in the Church of Scotland. As to religious parties, they were, I think, somewhat shy at first of seeking aid from Nonconformist sources. The appeal was rather to the Church of England, and to it, as having a common sympathy on the question of religious establishments; and Chalmers's recent great display in London on that topic gave them a vantage ground of which they made all possible use. Gradually, and just as they were learning severe lessons as to the obstinate ignorance or indifference of statesmen, it became obvious that the common ground on which they commanded the general sympathy of some English Churchmen was too narrow for any sustained common action. Indeed, by one of those strange revolutions of opinion, of which in our time we have seen so many, it turned out that the then narrowest school of English ecclesiastics—the school of which Henry Philpotts, Bishop of Exeter, was the foremost representative—had the deeper sympathy with the Scotch movement. With thoughtful men of all schools, then, as now, the national establishment of religion is one (and, with some, a subordinate) question, spiritual independence another (and, perhaps, with more) one far more important."

The one man in the Church of England, of name or note, who both understood the question and embraced the principle,—as he publicly expounded and defended it, with admirable ability—was the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel, then minister

of St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row. How far he was consistent, as the minister of a Church so ostentatiously Erastian as the Church of England, in speaking and writing as he did, it is needless now to inquire. He was not long in vindicating his consistency, and that at great cost, by acting on his convictions, and joining the ranks of the Nonconformists. He was one of the most estimable and lovable of men, whose "memory is blessed."—Several other clergymen (all, without exception, of the Evangelical, or "Low Church" school), expressed their sympathy (afterwards), not only in words, but in deeds, among whom it is pleasant to record the names of Mr. Mortimer, of Gray's Inn Road Chapel, London; Mr. Oswald Mosley, the Vicar of Birmingham; Mr. Wilson, the Vicar of Southampton; and *last,* not *least,* Mr. Edward Bickersteth. Still, as might have been anticipated, there was no substantial help to be looked for from that quarter, and the leaders were not long in discovering that it was so.

"*Then*" (Mr. B. goes on to say), "they turned to the Nonconformist Gentiles, and found (some of them to their glad surprise), that here,—here almost exclusively, warm sympathy and active aid were to be found. Not, however, from some of them in a very great hurry. To an English mind, Scotch ecclesiastical principles do not lie on the surface, and many a man, when he fishes for them, catches a crab from which he never extricates his line. It was patent to any English Nonconformist that ministers ought not to be intruded upon reclaiming congregations, just as confessedly patent in some cases, as the sentiment which dictates the grand old cry, 'No Popery.' It was plain, too, that civil authority should not rule the Church. But the puzzle became intensely perplexing to easy-thinking, easy-going people, when this latter proposition was predicated of an Established Church, claiming to be both rightfully established, and rightfully independent of the State.

"It came to pass, however, that enlightened by successive deputations, the real leaders of Nonconformist opinion and activity, even before the Disruption took place, enlisted heartily in the cause which stirred so deeply the hearts of Scotch

churchmen.—But here I must distinguish. I have no hesitation in placing in the van, the Wesleyan body, and its leaders. It is a fact, and it ought to be a part of the history, that they were the first to listen, consider, and approve, and then most vigorously to act, as best they could. I claim no credit for them. Their position was freer than that of other Nonconformists. With that intense practical instinct which is characteristic of them, they set themselves to inquire what it was all about, whether they ought to help, and if so, how. Further, they had no general disposition to weaken, or embarrass Established Churches,—much less to pull them down,—while they were entirely free from their control, and were almost nervously sensitive as to their undue influence. As to the formation of the pastoral tie, indeed, their system, at the first blush of it, seemed contrary to that contended for in Scotland; but at its very foundation, when it came to be looked at, there lay the popular veto. As to spiritual independence, who but worldlings dispute it? As to the compatibility of spiritual independence with the establishment of the Church insisting on it, they were convinced that such was the constitutional and legislative bargain in Scotland, between Church and State; that the system had worked well, so far, and so long as it had worked at all; and that when thoroughly worked, in one of its essential features, that of endowment,—as for instance, in the case of the Irish Presbyterians,—whatever its effect might have been on the Church, it had, to say the least, done no mischief to the State."

Mr. Bunting then proceeds to refer to the actual service rendered by the Wesleyan body, as "the most considerate, and best persuaded friends of the movement," through the medium of its literary organs—by petitions to the Legislature—by the speeches and writings of its most distinguished men, and pre-eminently by the devoted zeal of his own venerable father, Dr. Jabez Bunting, to whom he lovingly refers as "the friend of Chalmers, and so predisposed to listen to the faintest whisper of his voice." All he says, and more than all, on this head, I know to be true. Dr. Bunting was the author of the petition, which in name of the Conference, was laid on the table of the House

of Commons. I heard it read there by Mr. Fox Maule, when he presented it, and I remember well how visibly every sentence and syllable of it seemed to tell on the eagerly-listening audience; how admirably clear and cogent it was; and how, within quite a moderate compass, it set forth alike the facts and arguments of the case, in such a way as to leave nothing to be desired. The names of John Beecham and George Cubitt deserve also to be mentioned with gratitude for work done by them, along with that of Thomas Farmer, Esq. (Treasurer of the Wesleyan Foreign Missions), whose hospitality before the Disruption, and whose gifts after it, were alike munificent.

If the other Nonconformist bodies were somewhat shy before the event (of which, like many people nearer home, and who should have known better, they were somewhat incredulous),* they made up amply for their shyness by the overflow of their kindness and cordiality, afterwards.

To this also, Mr. Bunting bears willing testimony:—"In cordiality of co-operation, the leaders of the Congregational and Baptist bodies were by no means excelled even by the Wesleyans. Binney, like all other great men, growing more candid and tolerant of the position and opinions of others, every day he lived; Raffles, with his straightforward good sense, and affectionate geniality of temper; Parsons, a Puritan of the best modern type; those and men like those, were foremost in kindly service." With the above-named honoured fathers, I have pleasure in associating Dr. Andrew Reed, and Dr. John Leifchild of London, Mr. Angell James of Birmingham, and Mr. Adkins of Southampton, than whom, none of the many Congregational brethren, whose acquaintance I had the happiness of making, were more hearty in their sympathy, or more energetic in their efforts to enlist the sympathy of others in our behalf. Among the Baptists I remember best Dr. Cox of

* One of my own co-presbyters assured me, in the month of March, that not more than six men would come out; another, more given to prophetic calculation, insisted there would be only two, and that one of the two was so clever, that if there was a loophole open, he would certainly go in again. On my expressing the belief that there would be nearer six hundred than six, I was told that I had taken leave of my senses.

Hackney, and Mr. Andrew Fuller (son and name-son of a much revered father), as having warmly espoused our cause.

What the *Manchester* Committee did,—when the time came not for argument, but for action,—let Mr. Bunting again tell.

"I have no access," he says, "to the vast heap of papers which were it worth while would, if still extant, record the extensive action of that busy time, nor can I tell even its pecuniary results. Enough to say, that in every county of England, and in the innermost recesses of each, a system of public sermons and meetings was arranged and perseveringly pursued, which set English Nonconformity in a blaze.

"The campaign *commenced* in Manchester. What a force was that which came to help! Guthrie, Buchanan, Begg, and a host of English ministers (interchanging pulpits), by public collections made in almost every Evangelical Nonconformist Chapel raised £800 in that city on one memorable Sabbath day. Then, Manchester itself, and the neighbouring towns were saturated with public meetings. Buchanan, with insinuating clearness explained. Begg thundered, yet always with a downfall of healthful rain. Makgill Crichton with such vehement eloquence asserted his principles that people hardly dared question them. Then Guthrie, that great genius of universal oratory, played and pleaded till large congregations, in consentaneous laughter or tears, were overwhelmingly convinced.

"There were some curious expressions of sympathy. In one large, but not very civilised, town, a thistle in a flower-vase was placed conspicuously on the table at which the chairman sat, and, after devotional exercises, the people insisted on singing, 'Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled'! I remember how at the Rochdale meeting, John Bright, not professing to be very deep in the mystery of the contention, enjoyed it all the same, made a short but serviceable speech, and gave us £25."

At Southampton (it may be mentioned here, as a parallel to the Scotch thistle) the Mayor of the city, Mr. Andrews (Coach-builder to the Queen), on occasion of an annual entertainment which he was in the habit of giving to his employés and other citizens (the day of which celebration happened to be on the

Monday, after our public meeting and the pulpit services of the Sabbath), had his large saloon, where the banquet was being spread, decorated with banners—these banners bearing inscriptions large enough to be legible by every passer-by on the street,—and of these, four in number, that one which was most conspicuous, and which seemed to attract universal notice, was the one which had to do neither with England, Ireland, nor Wales, nor "All the world," besides, but with Scotland alone, and the "*Justice*" due to it—"*A Free Church for Scotland.*"

I had a pleasant interview with Mr. Andrews, as well as a kind invitation to the banquet; nor did he fail to swell by his contribution the very handsome amount which had been already received—larger, I was told, than had ever gone from Southampton before for any religious purpose, even the Bible Society itself—not much short of £200.

Mr. Bunting goes on to mention the names of the deputies with whom, as they passed through Manchester, he had pleasing intercourse, most of whom stayed a night or two at his house, and left hallowed memories behind—such men as Drs. Julius Wood, Robert Elder, Alexander Beith, Robert Macdonald, William Hetherington, William Hanna, Thomas Main, &c.; with such elders as James Crawford, George Meldrum, and George Lyon. "Candlish," he says, "was much wanted at home, but he came on rare occasions."

One of these occasions was when an attempt was to be made to storm the University of Oxford,—Mr. Bunting himself, along with Mr. George Lyon, of Glenogil, having gone as a deputation beforehand to feel the way, and make necessary arrangements. "We enlisted," he says, "the aid of all the Nonconformists of the town, and arranged for a public meeting. Candlish was to come as one of the preachers and speakers, and had prepared a sermon such as no other modern preacher could prepare, on Christian ethics—a sermon which was afterwards published as an article in, I think, the first number of the *North British Review.* We had got hold of the town, but we had no kind of access to the University. Not a Don could be got to sympathise with, or, indeed, to patiently hear us. We had to resolve to trust to the chance of the undergraduates attending the public

meeting.—We were dining merrily at the 'Mitre,' two or three hours before the time when, having completed our task, we had arranged to take our departure, when the waiter brought in a very polite note from the Vice-Chancellor, requesting the deputation from Scotland to call on him next morning at nine. We arranged, however, to call on him that evening. At nine punctually we waited on him. There was nothing to dread from his appearance. A small-built man, with silver hair; his face wearing a pleasant, post-prandial bloom, not, however, too highly coloured, every inch that was of him gentlemanly and refined, with a pleasant, perplexed air bowed us into our seats and took his own. He was positively unable to commence the conversation, and the Englishman" (of the deputation), "when he saw how the land lay, began with an apology for the hour of call. Still, though smoothing by every phrase of politeness, the way for what was to be said, the high dignitary paused. Again he had to be helped. He was told, what he very well knew, that we were the deputation from Scotland which had arranged for a public meeting in the town, in the course of a week or two. It would be impossible to caricature what followed. 'Yes, gentlemen,' he started, 'oh yes, I am quite aware; but, in the present circumstances of the University,—the Bishop of Exeter, you know,—I hardly think —do you think?' We quite understood what both of us thought, but it was hard to answer him. We did our best, but could get nothing out of him but half-finished sentences about the circumstances of the University, and the Bishop of Exeter; and as to what *he* thought, and whether *we* did not think. We took courage at last; conciliatorily admitted that we could not expect him to express any approbation of our intended proceedings; but felt sure that if he did not approve, he would not prohibit. But, no! 'He hardly thought in the present circumstances of the University, and the Bishop of Exeter, we knew,—he could avoid prohibiting it, and he did prohibit it,—and didn't we think?' So we left him,—and a pleasant murmur of 'Circum—— Uni—— Ex—— Hard,—— Think,' wafted us to the door. . . . The great meeting, at which Candlish was to inform and inflame the great University of

Oxford, was held in a Dissenting chapel—a place to which, in those days, no undergraduate would resort. How much Free Churchism has been talked at Oxford since that time!"

A similar attempt had, before this time, been made on Cambridge, by the same two valiant men, with as little success, inside the University, but with much more success without. The Regius Professor of Greek, who was waited on as the reputed head of the Evangelical Churchmen, both in the University and town (Charles Simeon's successor), though quite as polite as the Vice-Chancellor, was no less peremptory in his refusal either to discuss the question with his visitors (pleading a *providential cold*), or to countenance their intended proceedings. Nothing daunted by their repulse, the deputies resolved to call a meeting of the undergraduates, without other patronage than that which they had already secured from the mayor of the city and the Nonconformist clergy. It was a brave thing to do; and to Mr. Lyon chiefly belonged the credit of having pluck enough both to make the proposal and to go through with it. A large room in the Hotel was the place of meeting, and two o'clock P.M. was the hour. "At five minutes to two not a creature had entered the room, but as the clock struck, hundreds of undergraduates swarmed from the adjoining colleges, and in an instant sat with eyes fixed on the speaker at the rostrum. He began admirably—best, like most Scotchmen, at the beginning. For perhaps a quarter of an hour, he had given a very succinct, and, so far as history tells truth, accurate account of the Scotch Reformation, when, suddenly, a clear, sharp voice rang out from the further end of the room with the question, 'Who killed Archbishop Sharp?' The Englishman trembled for fear; but he will never forget the air of subdued penitence and pain with which Lyon, crossing one arm on his breast, answered the question—'Gentlemen,' said he, 'no one can possibly regret that unfortunate circumstance more than I do.' There was a round of immense applause, and the lecture, capitally conceived, expressed, and delivered, concluded with a demonstration quite as hearty as the first. Then rose a young man (I am bound to confess, previously instructed what to do in case of emergency, and notwithstand-

ing no emergency had arisen), and asked whether the principles for which the lecturer had contended were not substantially identical with those for which the Bishop of Exeter was contending in the Church of England? A very cautious reply in the affirmative brought the house down, and Lyon, that day, was the most famous man in the University. And I do not know what good seed was that day sown, or has since sprung up a hundredfold."

The Presbytery of London now includes a "Preaching Station" at Cambridge, the success of which encourages the hope of its soon becoming a fixed charge. Doubtless, the aforesaid meetings had not a little to do with the origination of it.

So much for the *Manchester* Committee and the movements emanating therefrom. We return now to London. The duty that devolved on the London Committee was to supplement the work of the central body, hailing from Manchester,* and to look after those places in town or country which they had been unable to overtake. Thus it came to pass that, along with one or more deputies from Scotland, I was despatched, generally on short notice, to such places as Walworth, Stepney, Kensington, Paddington, and Battersea (suburbs of London), to preach; or to Chelmsford, Gravesend, Southampton, York, Chester, Stafford, and Birmingham, to address public meetings.

Many are the pleasing recollections connected with all those places—so warm and cordial everywhere were both ministers and people; with none of them more than with Birmingham. There, associated with my friend and fellow-townsman, Dr. Davidson, of Lady Glenorchy's, our mission was simply, in the first instance, to reconnoitre, with a view to subsequent proceedings, it being considered doubtful whether it would be expedient at that time, when Chartism was rampant and rough, to attempt a public meeting. The first thing we did, accordingly, was to announce an exposition of the principles of the Free Church in the small place of worship then known as the "Scots' Church," Broad Street, on a week-day evening. Before the hour of meeting the place was crammed, but no one appeared to bid us welcome, with the exception of one courteous

* Organised and for several months worked by Mr. Bunting.

elderly gentleman, who introduced himself as Alderman James James (brother of the well-known minister), who said he had come for information, that all his sympathies were with us, and that if his impressions of the goodness of our cause were confirmed by what he heard at the meeting, he would be glad to be of service in any way, with a view to a larger movement than could be then originated, and that, being Mayor of the town, he would willingly take the chair at any public meeting that might be called.

It turned out, by-and-by, that Mr. J. A. James was in the body of the meeting while we were addressing it. He abstained, however, from showing himself till he saw what the temper of the audience appeared to be, and what the likelihood of success in proposing any further demonstration. Appearances being favourable, he rose from a back bench, where the noisiest part of the audience was (as though he had been one of them), and, after skilfully anticipating the objections and difficulties that might be felt by Dissenters and Voluntaries, like himself, who had been accustomed to identify all Establishments of religion with oppression, injustice, and abuse, and, stating them somewhat strongly, he went on to show that these were not such as to justify their looking coldly on the great movement in Scotland, or withholding their sympathy and help. He put the case of the Wesleyan body, who held the Establishment principle as firmly as did the Free Church, and making the supposition that they (the ministers of that body), by the wrongous interpretation, or application, of John Wesley's trust-deed in the courts of law, should be all ejected in one day from their chapels and stripped of their property,—(quite a conceivable thing), "would not the hearts and the homes of all Christian people in England," he asked, "be open to succour and shelter them?" Even so, and yet more, were they not bound to show the like sympathy with their brethren in Scotland, from the closer relationship, in various respects, between English Nonconformity and Scottish Presbyterianism, and from the close historical connection between the struggles of their Puritan forefathers and the brave Covenanters of old whose descendants the Free Churchmen of Scotland

claimed to be? His proposal of a great meeting in the Music Hall, under the presidency of the Mayor, was thereafter carried by acclamation.

In due time, accordingly, the meeting took place, and the four men whom Mr. James bargained for as deputies having been all secured—viz., Drs. Cunningham, Guthrie, and James Hamilton (whom he dubbed "the Macaulay of Evangelical Literature"), with Mr. Maitland Makgill, it proved quite as great a success as he assured us it would be. His own address on that occasion he closed with these weighty words, "In my view, the Disruption is one of the greatest events of modern times, and that man must have the eye of futurity who would pretend to set limits to its influence and tell where and how the effects of it shall extend!"

The financial result of the whole "raid" on England, as reported at next General Assembly (1844) by Dr. Tweedie (my much esteemed predecessor in London Wall), who was convener of the "Committee on English Deputations," amounted to £27,689, 1s. 9½d.

XXXIX. Ireland and America.

Of the sister Churches who came to the aid of the Free Church, the first to stretch out a helping hand was the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. On the morrow of the Disruption, within twenty-four hours after the event, a deputation of Irish brethren, with Professor Killen at their head, appeared in Tanfield to offer their cordial greetings, which they did in warm and eloquent terms. They had come, they said, commissioned to represent their own Irish Church at the General Assembly of their Mother Church, the Church of Scotland. Their first business after landing on these shores was to inquire where that Church was now to be found. They knew the distinctive features by which she was to be recognised, as these had been delineated in her standards and realised in her history. Their inquiry after these had guided them in their search, and it was at Tanfield, in the General Assembly of the Free Church, they had found what they sought. It is true you have not the representative of earthly royalty among you. We do not hear your meetings announced by the sound of martial music, or the tramp of soldiery; but what we see is the distinct recognition of Christ as King and Head of His Church. Such, in substance, was their introductory statement as they laid their credentials on the table. We rejoice that we have succeeded in our search, and we tender our commission to you as the Church of Scotland; and this announcement having been made, they proceeded, in the most fervent spirit of Christian brotherhood, to address the Assembly.

Thus, on their own responsibility, they had passed by the Scottish Establishment, and attached themselves to the Free Church. Immediately afterwards, when their own Assembly met

at Belfast, the step which they had taken was not only sustained and sanctioned, but the only question was, how best to follow up what had been done, and do justice to the feelings with which the Irish Church regarded their brethren in Scotland. Mr. Makgill Crichton, who had gone to represent the Free Church, tells how they took up the matter, as if the cause had been their own. Not content with giving their sympathies and their prayers, not even content with calling on their people to contribute, the members of the Assembly proceeded at once themselves to raise money on the spot. With the impulsive ardour of the Irish character, they put down their names, and in one night nearly £3000 was subscribed. When the deputation of the Free Church went through the North of Ireland, the same spirit was displayed, and soon the amount reported was £10,000, a sum that was afterwards very largely increased. As one of their ministers stated, there never was a claim made on the Irish Presbyterians which was so heartily responded to.

And others besides the Presbyterians took part in the movement, even the Episcopalians, to some extent, giving their aid. One of their number—the Earl of Roden—who was as prominent in the religious circles of his day as he was high in worldly rank, deserves special notice. Writing to the Rev. James Shields, of Newry (19th Aug. 1843), he says: "I assure you no one can sympathise with these good men who, for conscience' sake, have left house and home and kirk more than I do; and I wish it was in my power to contribute more largely to your fund for building churches in which they might preach the Gospel of Christ. But I am grieved to say the demands upon me in this country of various kinds keep me very bare. I enclose you a check for £10 as a token of my goodwill, if it is worth having; and hoping that a great blessing may attend the movement by the spreading of the Gospel far and wide.—I am," &c.

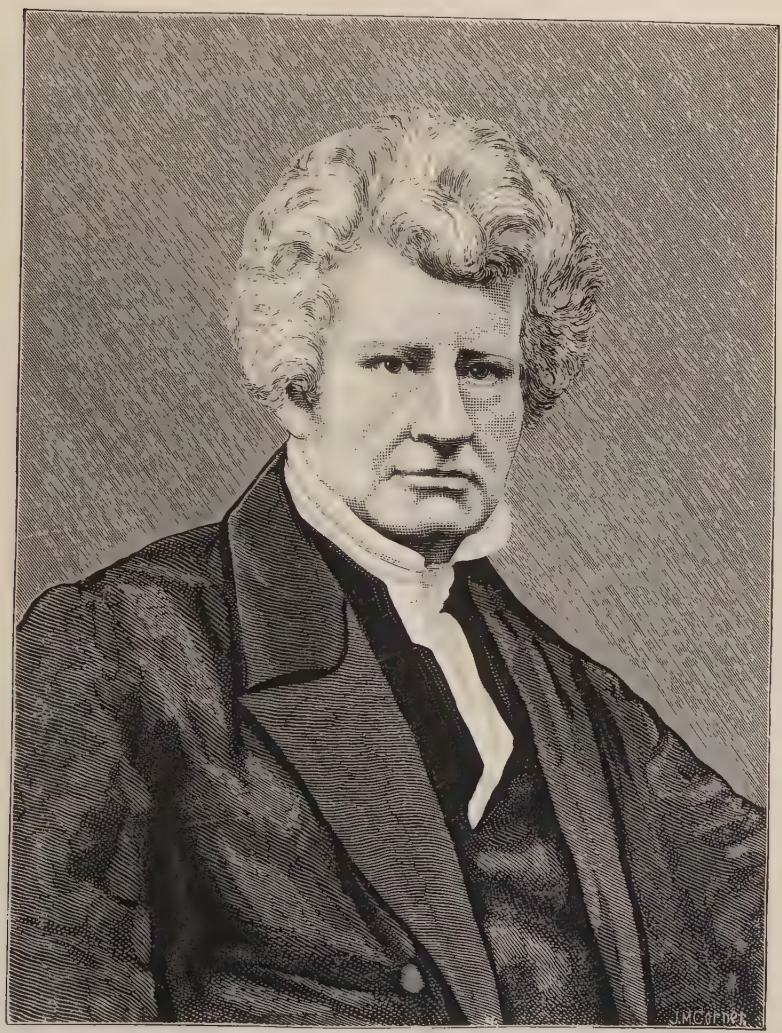
Another conspicuous movement of the same kind was the appeal to the Churches of America. Towards the end of 1843, Dr. Cunningham went out, accompanied by Henry Ferguson, Esq., an elder from Dundee, for the purpose of making the case

of the Free Church known to our American brethren. Other deputies followed to take part in the work, conspicuous among whom were Dr. Burns, of Paisley, and Professor Chalmers, now of London. A series of meetings was held in the leading towns, at forty of which Dr. Cunningham delivered addresses. Among the Presbyterians the greatest interest was awakened, which to a great extent was shared in by the Congregationalists, Methodists, and Baptists. The story of the Free Church was told to listening thousands; her principles, her sacrifices, and the struggle for self-support in which she was engaged were fully explained; and everywhere there were the manifestations of the deepest interest and most cordial sympathy.

"The only difference betwixt us in matters of opinion," says Dr. Cunningham, which was brought out was "in relation to the question of national establishments of religion. Even in regard to this there was not so much difference of principle as at first sight might appear. It is true, in that country a general horror is entertained of a union between the Church and the State; and the great body of those whom you meet are rather anxious to profess their abhorrence of any such union. . . . But I find, at the same time, a very general admission of the great Scriptural principle, for which alone we contend, that an obligation is laid on nations and rulers to have regard to the moral government of God as supreme, and to the welfare of the Church of Christ. The general admission of the doctrine is all that we care about. . . . I need scarcely say that neither I nor any of my colleagues ever concealed or compromised our principles in regard to this matter; . . . and I think it right to say that the Churches of America knew full well that we do adhere to this great and important Scriptural truth. I have not seen or heard anything in America at all to shake my firmness in this great principle as a principle of our Church. But I have seen much fitted to modify the impressions which some of us may once have entertained of the importance of State assistance to the Church of Christ and to the cause of religion." *

It is interesting to observe what the Americans thought of our deputies. Dr. J. W. Alexander, of New York, speaks of

* Blue Book, 1844, p. 67.



DR. CUNNINGHAM

Mr. Ferguson. At first he had felt some surprise at his being sent, especially when he found that Chalmers had "picked him out. But my wonder ceased when I heard him on the evening of the 18th. He spoke an hour and three-quarters by the watch. I wish it had been twice as long. In the first half of his speech he erred by causing too much laughter. His *vis comica* is amazing. In the latter part he rose to a height of passion such as I have seldom witnessed. A critic would have condemned everything in the elocution, but the eloquence was penetrating and transporting. . . . As he rose, his diction became elegant and sublime; and yet he is only a merchant at Dundee." *

Of Dr. Cunningham, the same writer speaks:—"He is the most satisfactory foreigner I have seen. By the Scotch papers I perceive he ranks among the first four or five of the Free Church. Height about six feet, and large in proportion—a stout but finely formed man, very handsomely dressed, and in an eminent degree the gentleman in everything but in excess of snuff. . . . Powerful reasoning and sound judgment seemed to be his characteristics, and he is a walking treasury of facts, dates, and ecclesiastical law. I heard him for an hour on Friday in a speech to the students. Indescribable Scotch intonation, but little idiom and convulsion of body, but flowing, elegant language, and amazing power in presenting an argument. . . . He is a powerful fellow, and a noble instance of what may be done without any pathos or any decoration." †

Dr. Hodge speaks of him in private intercourse:—"He was twice at Princeton, and on both occasions made my house his home. He was a man whom you knew well as soon as you knew him at all. He revealed himself at once, and secured at once the confidence and love of those in whom he felt confidence. I do not recollect of ever having met any one to whom I was so much drawn, and for whom I entertained such high respect and so warm a regard, as I did for him on such a short acquaintance. His strength of intellect and force of character were manifest at first sight. With this strength was combined a winning gentleness of spirit and manner in private social

* Life of Dr. Cunningham, p. 203. † *Ibid.* p. 205.

intercourse. It was, however, seen to be the gentleness of the lion in repose. His visit was one of those sunny spots on which whenever I look back on life my eyes rest with delight."*

An onlooker has described the meeting with Dr. Hodge:—"You know brother Hodge is one of the most reserved of men, nor is a first acquaintance with him generally very assuring or very attractive to strangers. But I remarked with what warmth and cordiality he met Dr. Cunningham, as if he had met an old friend from whom he had been long separated. And it was so with Cunningham too. The two greatest theologians of the age were at once friends and brothers. They seemed at once to read and know each the other's great and noble mind."†

In his report to the General Assembly,‡ Dr. Cunningham stated that money had been collected to the amount of £9000, and some thousands more were expected. In the then circumstances of the country, he considered this a liberal contribution.

But more important by far was the impression made on the American Churches, and the response which was called forth.

"I confess to you," says Dr. Sprague,§ "that the aggregate of the collection, so far, is not by any means what I think it should have been, and, so far as that is concerned, I feel rather mortified than gratified by the result; but, though we may not have done you much good, I am sure your mission has been of great use to us."

The *Princeton Review*, one of their leading periodicals, states:—"We doubt not that the clear exhibition of this truth [the Headship of Christ], by the Scottish delegates, will be a means of spiritual good, for which all our contributions will be a most inadequate compensation. Nay, were we to increase them a hundredfold we should still be their debtors, if only we are made to feel, more than we have hitherto done, that Jesus Christ is indeed our Lord. It is this more than anything else that has interested us in their mission. We have felt under some of their addresses as we never have felt before. We have had clearer views of the intimate connection between the

* Life of Dr. Cunningham, p. 206. † *Ibid.*

‡ Blue-Book 1844, p. 71.

§ Life of Dr. Cunningham, p. 217.

practical recognition of Christ's kingly office and the life of God in the soul, and we think we see one of the principal sources of that strength of character, elevation of mind, and constancy in trials which Scottish Christians have so often exhibited. Let any man, with this principle before his mind, read the history of Scotland, and he will have the solution of the mystery of servant girls and labourers dying on the gibbet or at the stake for a question of Church government. Let him contrast the bearing of Knox, Melville, or Henderson when they stood before kings—we will not say with the slavish adulation of the unworthy bishops of King James, but—with the spirit of such good men as Cranmer, and they will see the difference between believing that Christ is King and believing that the king is Head of the Church." *

The well-known Moses Stuart was drawing near his end, and writes: — "I am nearly worn out"; "deep is the interest I feel in your undertaking. Persevere. It is the cause of truth and duty. The great Head of the Church will smile upon it, and bless you sooner or later. Never! never! commit the precious Church to the hands of graceless politicians." †

Dr. Murray, better known as "Kirwan," wrote :— "Your example in Scotland is putting new life into the religious world. Switzerland is feeling it,—India, Canada, all America. Your action in favour of a free Gospel and Church, and of a living Christianity, will tell upon the world throughout unborn generations. The time will, perhaps, come when I can look upon your Free Assembly—*then I shall die in peace.*" ‡

Thus in various ways the friends of the Free Church in America showed their cordial feelings in her favour. But there was one proposal which proved more strikingly than all the rest the depth of their sympathy and friendship. Dr. Cunningham had been telling of the hardships to which congregations in Scotland were subjected, when he was met with the following question: "Why do not your whole seven hundred congregations come out here in a body, and settle in some of our Western States? . . . The Americans generally entertain a

* Blue Book, 1844, p. 70.

† Life of Dr. Cunningham, p. 214. ‡ *Ibid.* p. 214.

high respect for the Scotch Presbyterians, as well as for the Irish Presbyterians, whom they distinguish as the Scotch-Irish, and I have met many persons who, without any joke, but in perfect sincerity, entertained the question of the whole Church coming out in a body to the Western States, where they could get as much land as they choose—a location as large as Scotland itself, if they required it, and possessing a soil of great fertility. . . . The answer I gave to such proposals was this—but the Assembly may give a different one if they choose—my answer was, that we could not consent to abandon Scotland to Erastians and Moderates, and from the many tokens we experienced of the favour of God, we entertained a well-grounded hope that the Free Church of Scotland would be honoured in largely promoting the cause of Christ, and be a blessing to the people of the country."

XL. The Continent.

On the Continent, the effect of the Disruption was to restore much of that unity of feeling which had once subsisted between the Church of Scotland and the Protestant Churches abroad. The time was when Holland, France, and Switzerland were the great refuge to which our persecuted fathers were compelled to betake themselves, and the consequence was that the closest ties of Christian brotherhood were formed with the Churches of those lands. In this, however, as in other departments of Church life, the blighting influence of Moderatism was felt. Comparatively little interest was taken by the Church of Scotland in the advancement of religion, or in the spiritual state of the Churches of other countries. But no sooner had the Ten Years' Conflict entered on its more serious stages than the general attention of Christians on the Continent was arrested. Instinctively it was felt that a new scene was opening, and that a battle was being fought on Scottish ground which involved issues of momentous importance to the Church and to the world. Already, in March and April, 1843, formal addresses had been received from the ministers of Basle, from the valleys of Piedmont, the Canton of Schaffhausen, and from Christian communities in Holland, Zealand, and Utrecht, telling of their sympathy with our Church in her struggles. A still stronger step was taken by the King of Prussia, who sent a special agent, Pastor Sydow, to witness the end of the conflict, and to report on the causes which led to it. When this report appeared, it was gratifying to find that, coming from a disinterested observer, it consisted simply of a thorough-going defence and vindication of the Free Church.

Special interest was awakened in 1844 by the arrival of the

Rev. Frederick Monod,* who came as the representative of the United Protestantism of France, and appeared on the platform at Tanfield to present the brotherly greetings of the French Church. The result was a resolution by the Assembly to make common cause with the native Protestant Churches abroad, and a committee was appointed, with Dr. Lorimer of Glasgow, as convener, who succeeded during the first year in raising about £2000 in aid of their Continental brethren.

Still greater enthusiasm was stirred up in May, 1845, by the arrival of Dr. Merle D'Aubigné. Never since the day of the Disruption had the building of Tanfield been so crowded. Men hurried up from the country, and eagerly competed for places. The benches open to the public, the seats of the members, the passages were all densely filled. "In fact the magnificent hall presented an unbroken mass of human beings." The greatest orator of Scotland was going to introduce the most eloquent writer of Switzerland to a Scottish audience. In striking words Dr. Chalmers spoke in name of his country, and gave a welcome to the illustrious stranger. And no less striking was the reply.

"I come from Geneva, and I am in Scotland. Three centuries ago, a man came from France to our city at the foot of the Alps, on the borders of Lake Leman, and there he reared the standard of truth. His name was John Calvin. Some years afterwards, another man came across the Jura to our magnificent country. He had been taken prisoner, and made his escape from the Castle of St. Andrews. He had been driven out of England and Scotland. His name was John Knox. These two men embraced as brothers. John Knox shook hands with John Calvin—the representative of Scotland and the man of Geneva. Well, dear friends and brethren, I see in this Assembly the successors of Knox and his people. The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland is before me, and I come from Geneva to give you a brother's hand. After three centuries, Geneva and Scotland shake hands together in the name of the Lord to whom we belong, and who shed His blood for us—in the name of His exclusive dominion, and the inde-

* Blue Book, 1844, p. 211.

pendence of His Church from any temporal power. We shake hands in a spirit, not of pride, but of love, of humility, of peace." *

Thus his address opened, and from point to point the stream of eloquence flowed, profoundly impressing the great audience, and stirring every heart into enthusiasm.

But more eloquent than any speech was the course of events which immediately followed. A disruption took place in the Church of the Canton de Vaud. It was inquired into on the spot by Mr. Andrew Gray of Perth, who was sent over for the purpose, and so favourably reported on that a collection was made on behalf of the outgoing brethren; and to a considerable extent that Free Church was aided in the midst of her initial difficulties by the contributions of the Free Church of Scotland.

Then followed, in 1848, the disruption of the Protestant Church in France, and the appearance of Count Gasparin, along with the Rev. Frederick Monod, to plead the cause of their Free Churches. And very cordially was the appeal responded to in name of the Assembly by Dr. Cunningham, who bore his testimony on behalf of the movement. The deputation were welcomed as representing the noble Church of the old Huguenots.†

From time to time a succession of such men appeared at the Assembly. Dr. Capadose, Count St. George, Professor de la Harpe, and many others came from different quarters. The platform at Tanfield became a meeting-place where the representatives of many nationalities and Churches came together in love and loyalty to the same Saviour, and to express their sympathy with the Free Church in her principles and struggles. Sometimes the addresses were delivered in somewhat broken English. Often they were interspersed with foreign idioms and pronunciations; but none the less—rather all the more—they arrested the attention and spoke home to the hearts of the people. It was with unfailing interest that ministers and laymen united in giving them welcome. In view of the outside public, as Lord Cockburn remarked, "the moral impression of the party" [the Free Church], "and its almost European station, elevated it above all other native sects more than even the

* Blue Book, 1845, p. 133. † *Ibid.* 1849, p. 65.

splendour of its voluntary treasury. Its hall at Tanfield was crowded, though it be supposed to hold 3000 people. The Assembly was bowed to and shaken by the hand by deputations from religious communities that never sent their representatives on such a pilgrimage before."*

But gratifying as all this was, there was some risk, as Dr. Candlish remarked, lest the kind of statements addressed to the Free Church from so many honoured brethren, should fill them with pride and vainglory. But, I confess, he continued that a very different impression was made on me. "A spirit of solemn awe took possession of my mind, not only from the consideration of the unworthiness of this Church, which occupies so high a position, but still more from the risk and hazard there may be of our dishonouring, not only our position, but that God who has assigned it us to occupy."†

While men were animated by such feelings, it is easy to see how the Free Church, from the very outset of her history, was led to take the deepest interest in the Protestant Churches of the Continent, struggling, as many of them were, with formidable difficulties, while upholding the cause of Christ.

At first, the great object was to raise money on their behalf, and aid them in their work. Along with this, certain towns were fixed on, where ministers were planted and congregations formed, as centres of Evangelical influence. At a later period, the plan was adopted of giving supply, during certain months of the year, in places much frequented by English-speaking strangers. In this way the Free Church has made her influence increasingly felt in Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, and even in Spain and Portugal.

In these pages, however, it is impossible to give any adequate account of such a work, where the field is so wide and the details so numerous. As an example of what was done by some of those Disruption ministers who were compelled to leave Scotland, we may refer to Dr. Stewart's labours in Italy.

He had been parish minister of Erskine, on the Clyde, as his father, the well known Dr. Stewart, was before him. In 1843, he resigned the living and joined the Free Church, but no

* Journal, ii. p. 114. † Blue Book, 1846, p. 81.

residence could be got in the parish, and the exposure which this involved brought on attacks of illness, so often repeated, and so severe, that he was forced to part from his people, and seek a sphere of labour in some milder climate.

Already, while yet a student, he had spent three years on the Continent—one of them in Italy. Just at the time when his resignation was given in, a minister was wanted for Leghorn, where the Free Church was about to open a station, a committee of ladies in Glasgow having undertaken to provide the funds. Dr. Stewart received the appointment, and was settled in 1845. In the first instance, his pastoral work lay amidst the English-speaking residents, the sailors in the port also receiving a great part of his attention.

On leaving Scotland for Italy, however, his hope had been to find mission work among the Italians, and to be of use to the Waldensian Church, in which, from boyhood, he had taken the deepest interest. Year after year, accordingly, he was up in the valleys, attending the meeting of their Synod as representing the Free Church, and ready at all times to give them his zealous aid.

But it was after the great political changes of 1862 had fairly set Italy free to receive the Gospel that his influence was specially put forth. In 1866 he came over to Britain to introduce Dr. Revel and Signor Prochet, asking the aid of English and Scottish Christians; and, single-handed, he took on himself to a large extent the financial burdens of the Waldensian Church.

For the congregation in Leghorn itself, he raised £1800. The schools in connection with it were six in number, attended by 300 scholars, nine-tenths of them belonging to Roman Catholic families. They were superintended by himself and Mrs. Stewart, and the greater part of the expense—£350 a-year—was raised by him.*

At no small cost he provided a Grammar school at Pomaret, Theological Libraries at Florence and La Tour, and annual Bursaries for Theological students.

At Florence a Theological college was opened in the Salviati

* Blue Book, 1872, Rep. vii. p. 17.

Palace, and the price, amounting in all to £6846, had to be found by him. His last great effort in the way of pecuniary aid, was the providing of the Waldensian Church at Rome, which cost £14,000.

But there was more important work than the raising of funds. When the Waldensians launched their scheme of missions, taking Italy with its Popish population as their great mission field, it was Dr. Stewart who counselled and guided the movement.

When the Scottish Bible Society entered on their Italian work, and sent forth their Colporteurs to circulate the Word of God, the management of their operations devolved on Dr. Stewart,* involving an amount of laborious and anxious care which few would have been willing to undertake.

One more service he has rendered to the country of his adoption in preparing a commentary on the Gospels, a large portion of which has already appeared, and which is destined to prove a signal boon to those Italians who have few opportunities of knowing what Evangelical Protestant literature really is.

For the first five years Dr. Stewart stood alone; but Naples, Rome, Florence, Geneva, Nice, followed one after another. Churches were built, congregations formed, ministers ordained, and the result has been that, owing to Dr. Stewart and his work, a new Presbytery has been added to the roll of the Free Church.

Assuredly it has not been in vain that the former minister of Erskine was led to leave his native land, and induced to make the evangelisation of Italy the great work of his life. Among the Waldenses especially, he is regarded with feelings of no common gratitude. "You claim Dr. Stewart as one of yourselves," said Signor Prochet at the General Assembly in Edinburgh,† "bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh, and you may well do so, because in the land in which he has been living for thirty years, he has taught not only the Protestants but the Roman Catholics to respect and esteem Scotland and Scottish Protestants. But, if you claim him as yours, we also claim him as being ours. He has not been thirty years by our side, not

* Blue Book, 1869, Rep. vii. p. 6. † *Ibid.* 1874, p. 161.

to become part of us. It is true, I have no parchment to show to you with the name of Dr. Stewart saying that he has become a citizen of the Waldensian Alps. But, if ever you come to those valleys, I will show you 20,000 living hearts, upon which his name is written in characters that can never be blotted out." *

Important service has also been rendered by these preaching stations, which are kept up during part of the year. The number of persons on the Continent speaking English is great, and constantly increasing. Besides residents, there are tourists invalids, pleasure-seekers, students, governesses, servants. The Anglican Church is not unfrequently in the hands of Ritualists, and it is most important to bring within the reach of such classes, religious services in which the Gospel is faithfully preached.

Our hard-working ministers at home are often the better for the change. Where health is failing, and strength is worn down, great benefit is often derived from a time of comparative rest, and men return to their homes braced and invigorated; all the better for the new scenes they have witnessed, and the Christians belonging to other Churches whom they have met.

It is, indeed, remarkable how the Free Church in these stations comes in contact with persons of many different nationalities and denominations. Those who never enter a Free Church at home, not only freely join in her services abroad, but in many cases express their grateful sense of the privileges enjoyed. "I think," says Mr. Fergusson of Leven, "I had on one occasion eight or nine nationalities in the audience I was addressing at Montreux'—an example of what is going on, in some degree, at the other stations. It is something to send men back to their homes in different parts of the world carrying with them a friendly feeling in favour of the Free Church and her work. It is something to let the Roman Catholics of those countries see the true unity of the Church when Protestants of different denominations prove their oneness of heart in worshipping together, and sitting round the same Communion table. It brings out

* Blue Book, 1874, p. 161.

their true brotherhood in Christ, as opposed to the external and mechanical unity of which Popery boasts. But, more important still, there is the opportunity of preaching the Gospel and scattering the good seed of the Word, which may be carried to the ends of the earth. Many a passing stranger has been refreshed, and many a suffering invalid has been comforted, and borne grateful testimony to the benefits they have received.

Thus an intelligent American, Dr. Buist, states, that "in almost every town on the Mediterranean coast, and, indeed, in the interior of the Continent where any considerable number of English people sojourn, there is found a preaching station, if not an organised Free Church. I was surprised to find the number of places thus occupied. Travelling over those Roman Catholic countries, one is scarcely ever out of sight of the Blue Banner of Presbyterian Protestantism, thrown to the breeze by the zealous hands of the Scottish Free Church. These stations are intended, in the first place, to secure for resident Scotchmen and their families their accustomed privileges. For, go where you will, Scottish enterprise has gone before you, and Scotchmen have made themselves a home where you are still a stranger; and commonly the Scotchman is unwilling to remain long in a place without enjoying the privileges of 'ordinances.' But not unfrequently these preaching places are at the same time missionary stations, for operating on the native population."

"The eyes of the Churches on the Continent," Dr. Candlish exclaimed, in 1847, are fixed on us. I cannot imagine that this Church will abandon the glorious work which God has given her to do.

Yet another important step has been taken in bringing over students of divinity belonging to the Continental Churches to study in our Scottish colleges. The Jewish missionaries in Hungary and Bohemia had come in contact with some of the more promising young men, and it occurred to them that much good might be done by these candidates for the ministry coming to reside and study for a time in our divinity halls. A living bond of mutual sympathy would be formed with these young pastors, through whom the influence of the Free Church would make itself felt in those lands.

Bursaries were accordingly provided, and the results have proved eminently satisfactory. Already, in the Bohemian and Hungarian Churches, there has been raised up a band of devoted and youthful pastors, who speak in the most grateful terms of the benefits received during their residence in the midst of us. Besides attending our divinity halls, they have been brought in contact with our home missions, our prayer meetings, and Sabbath schools, and seen the different methods in which our Scottish Churches carry on their work. What is still more important, they have been brought in contact with religious life, as seen in the family, and in the intercourse of society. Many of them have spoken with the deepest gratitude of the impression which all this has produced, leading, in some cases, to a complete change of their religious views and feelings, and conferring lasting benefits on their souls.

As an example, we may refer to the first of these students who came from Hungary,—Francis Balogh,—now Professor of Church History in the University of Debreczin, where his lectures are attended by a class of 150 students:—"I cannot say," he states, writing in English, "what an edifying thing it is to me to read something about your state and advancement The Polar star to which I turn is your Church. There I received the real lasting impression—the evangelical rays which illumined my soul since. I shall be for ever grateful to it. As a professor, I endeavour to spread among my students the evangelical truth, and they hear me with satisfaction."

The Church to which he belongs numbers 1400 congregations.

Thus quietly and earnestly has the Free Church sought to enter through those doors of usefulness which God in His providence has opened up on the Continent. Our relations with these Churches are on the most cordial footing. Instinctively in times of difficulty they have learned to turn to the Free Church for counsel and aid. It is a privilege to have won the confidence of so many of these faithful men, and to be fellow-workers with them in the cause of God.

XLI. The Colonies.

While the Ten Years' Conflict was going on in Scotland, its effects soon began to be felt in Canada, Australia, and wherever Presbyterianism had obtained a footing in the Colonies. Still more, when the Disruption had actually taken place, a feeling of keen interest was awakened among the Scotchmen settled in those lands.

There were some, however, to whom this gave serious offence. Dr. Norman Macleod complains that "the angry spirit of Churchism, which has disturbed every fireside in Scotland, thunders at the door of every shanty in the backwoods." But, the truth is, that the Colonial ministers who adhered to the Scottish Establishment, had themselves to blame for much of that keenness. The news of the Disruption had acted on them like a charm. Hundreds of pulpits were vacant in Scotland, and, in hot haste, men left their Canadian congregations, and started across the sea eager to have a share of the spoil. Their congregations, meantime, did not like it. "You see, sir," one of the people said, "they were on our side, but Satan took them up to an exceeding high mountain and showed them, across the Atlantic, empty manses, good stipends, and comfortable glebes in Scotland, and—they fled from us." * It was natural in such circumstances that the people should turn to those who now formed the Free Church, and who previously had done so much on their behalf.

In 1825, the Glasgow Colonial Society had been formed for the purpose of supplying religious ordinances to the Canadians. Dr. Burns, of Paisley, had been the very life and soul of the movement, ably assisted, however, by men like Dr. Beith, Dr.

* Blue Book, 1846, p. 125. From the district of Pictou alone, there were six who at once set off.

Welsh, Dr. Henderson, and others who belonged to the Evangelical party in the Church.* Their operations were carried on with energy. Not a few of the most promising young preachers were sent out—men like John Bayne, Matthew Miller, George Romanes, William Rintoul—and soon the Presbyterian cause in Canada assumed a new aspect. Among others, they had all but succeeded in sending away from Scotland Dr. Candlish, then assistant at Bonhill. He had been actually nominated for one of their stations, when circumstances occurred which induced him to pause before closing with the appointment. This incident, as Dr. Begg remarked, was "not unlike the arrest of Cromwell when about to sail for America, and it strikingly illustrates the wonderful way in which God overrules the desires of His servants, and marks out the bounds of their habitations." †

At the Disruption, amidst the many other pressing claims which came upon the Free Church, the Colonies were not forgotten. An affectionate address was sent to all the Synods, inviting them to place themselves in connection with the Free Church, and assuring them that the work would be carried on with not less, but rather with greater, zeal. From the Synod of Canada there came a courteous, but hesitating reply. There was some doubt as to whether the proposed change of connection would not involve the loss of their Government allowances. Ultimately it was ascertained that if the vote in favour of the Free Church were unanimous, the grants would be continued; but if the Synod divided, all the money would go to those who adhered to the Scottish Establishment. Unanimity was found to be impossible, and the result was that in July, 1844, a Disruption took place. By a majority of 39 to 21 (23) the Synod resolved to continue in the old connection. The minority protested, withdrew, and constituted themselves into a separate Synod, taking the original name, "The Presbyterian Church of Canada," and placing themselves in fellowship with the Free Church of Scotland.

* When a Colonial Committee was afterwards appointed by the Church of Scotland, the Convenership was given to another, and Dr. Burns was passed over. There was a feeling in some quarters that this was unjust.

† *Free Church Magazine*, iv. p. 329.

In Nova Scotia the vote went the other way, the Synod, by a majority of two-thirds, setting itself free from its connection with the Established Church of Scotland, and taking a position similar to that of the minority in Canada.

Very cordially did the Free Church at once stretch out a helping hand to their brethren. The Committee which was appointed had indeed to begin their work with an empty exchequer, but they went on in the faith that God would fill it; and nine months afterwards it was found that a sum of £3619 had been put at their disposal. A single incident may be mentioned as showing who they were who all along had been the friends of these Colonial missions. A Ladies' Committee in connection with the Church of Scotland had been formed in Edinburgh for the purpose of collecting funds in aid of the scheme. In 1843, it appears that, without a single exception, the members of that Committee joined the Free Church.*

In coming to the help of the Canadian Churches, the first step was to send out deputations. Men like Dr. Begg, Dr. M'Lauchlan, Mr. Arnot of Glasgow; Dr. Alexander of Kirkcaldy; Dr. Couper of Burntisland, and many others of the more able and devoted ministers, went to give their aid; and all over the Provinces there was a busy time of preaching, consulting with brethren, addressing meetings, and holding intercourse with the people. Of all these deputies, none had such a welcome as Dr. Burns of Paisley. In 1844 he had gone to America, where he was associated with Dr. Cunningham in his visits to the churches. By special invitation, he was induced to prolong his tour into Canada, where he had many friends. Delegates from the various churches came to meet him at Brockville and Prescott. "His reception was most enthusiastic. He was escorted from Brockville to Prescott by a long train of men on horseback; and men, women, and children, in all kinds of waggons and carriages, so that the procession extended for upwards of half-a-mile. In fact, his reception in this part of Canada was like a military triumph.'"†

In reply to the appeal of Dr. Burns and his fellow-deputies,

* Blue Book, Glasgow, 1843, p. 102.

† Life of Dr. Burns, p. 186.

Mr. Lewis states: "The Canadas contributed about £2000 to the Free Church—a plain indication that the heart of the people is toward us."

One thing urgently pressed from the outset was, that the Colonists should set up theological halls, and rear a native ministry of their own. A grant of £200 was voted to enable them to make a beginning at Toronto. What was of far more importance, Mr. King of Glasgow—afterwards Dr. King of Halifax—was sent to supply temporarily one of the pulpits, and begin a divinity hall. His work, as described in one of the local newspapers, was singularly successful. In church it is said, the people hang on his lips with the deepest attention, and evidently with great delight. He teaches the divinity students five days a-week, presides at the prayer-meetings, and takes much to do with the Sabbath school. When not in the class-room during the week, he is visiting the sick, &c. "It is impossible to describe the attachment of the people to their temporary pastor." *

The attendance at his theological classes, also, was, from the first, encouraging. Two or three years before, a college had been opened at Kingston in connection with the Established Church, which, in 1844, was attended by seven theological students; but when the Disruption (Canadian) took place, six of these went over to the Free Church. At Toronto, Dr. King began with a class of fourteen young men, of whose talents and diligence he speaks in high terms.

It is interesting to observe how, in the Eastern provinces, a similar course was followed. Mr. Forrester, formerly of Sorby, afterwards of Paisley, had gone as a deputy to Halifax, and like Mr. King at Toronto, while supplying the pulpit, had gathered round him a band of students—sixteen in number—to whom he taught theology. The commencement was so full of promise, that the matter was taken up by local parties. † The Free Church gave their aid. The Colonists in one year raised £740. Dr. King was appointed first Professor of Divinity, and the Presbyterians of the three Eastern provinces united in their

* *Witness* Newspaper, 19th March, 1845.

† Blue Book, 1848, p. 171.

determination to raise a native ministry from among themselves.*

No less energy was shown in other departments, and soon the results began to appear. In the Canadian Synod, instead of the twenty-three ministers of 1844, there were, after four years' work, seventy ministers in settled congregations, besides a hundred separate missionary stations, and numerous openings for yet further extension. "The Church," said Dr. Willis, "now numbers seventy ministers; but I am perfectly satisfied that it might soon number three times that, if only we had a due contribution not of money, but of men." †

More important, however, was the step taken by Dr. Burns when he left his native land, joined the Theological College of Toronto, and threw himself into the work of the Canadian Church. He had long held a prominent position in Scotland as one of the Evangelical party. When the commercial depression of 1816 and 1820 had forced many of the Paisley weavers to emigrate, the cry of not a few of his own former hearers had come to him from the backwoods asking the bread of life. In response to these appeals he had succeeded in instituting the Glasgow Colonial Society already referred to. Ever afterwards the religious interests of these provinces had lain very near his heart; and now, after a long ministry in Paisley, it was an interesting spectacle to see him set forth resolved to spend the last of his days in the work of training young ministers, and consolidating the rising Church of the Colony.

In name of the Colonial Committee Dr. James Buchanan wrote bidding him farewell, and congratulating him on the "central and commanding position" he was to occupy, whence "an evangelical influence might emanate over the whole of Canada." It was impossible, he said, to over-estimate its importance, and "it is a source of heart-felt satisfaction to us all that one so eminently qualified in point of talent, learning, and piety, has been found willing to devote himself to the work."

Dr. Burns was far advanced in life, but the vivacity and ardour which he displayed took men by surprise. It is a noble thing, said Dr. Begg, that Dr. Burns has done, leaving his

* Blue Book, 1849. † *Ibid.* 1848, p. 178.

native country at his time of life, settling in a distant land, and working there with such energy and zeal and untiring vigour. "It is in the highest degree honourable."* "I saw twenty-five students under his care."

As might have been expected the cause of theological education continued to prosper. In one year the Synod collected for their college, £1200. Dr. Willis, of Glasgow, well-known in Scotland as an able theologian, was appointed Principal and Professor. In 1847 the attendance at the Divinity Hall was 37, in 1848 it had increased to 43. The rising generation were giving themselves to the work of the ministry. In 1868, when Dr. Burns addressed the General Assembly at Edinburgh, he was able to state, that about 170 ministers had gone forth from the Divinity Hall in Toronto to join the ranks of the Canadian Church. †

Everywhere among the people there had arisen at that time an eager desire for Gospel ordinances. "I can testify," says Dr. Begg, "that the Disruption in Scotland sounded like a peal of Gospel truth throughout Canada, and over the whole New World.‡ It was one of the most powerful sermons ever preached —a sermon that all parties could understand. A most excellent man in Canada told me—and I know that his words describe the case of many others—'Why, Sir,' said he, 'the first thing that made me think of Scotland and understand its church was the Disruption.' It has filled the world and paved the way for the missionaries and ministers of our Church."

In some cases the warmth of denominational zeal came out very decisively, and as might have been expected it was met with especially among the Highlanders. On a late occasion word had come to one of their settlements that a Gaelic minister was to hold a service forty miles from where they lived, and they set off, some of them carrying their infant children all that distance, along almost impassable roads, but finding on their arrival that it was an Established Church minister who was to officiate, they simply carried their children home again, saying that they would wait for a minister of their own Church. §

* Blue Book, 1846, p. 126.
† Life of Dr. Burns, p. 458.
‡ *Ibid.* 1846, p. 134.
§ Blue Book, 1845, Inverness, p. 5.

But, apart from such denominational feelings, the Presbyterian population all over Canada had been greatly stirred up, and felt deeply the religious impulse of the time. The years which followed their Disruption of 1844 are spoken of as "a period of awakening zeal and quickening spiritual life among the people." Long afterwards one of the outgoing Canadian ministers remarks, "These were glorious times." With one voice the deputies from Scotland declared that wherever they went they were received with open arms—men were eager to listen to the Gospel message, and all over the country there was the promise of abundant spiritual fruit. Mr. Macnaughtan from Paisley, indeed, was able to assure the Assembly that there was more than the promise. In Canada East "they can point to special cases of conversion, the fruit of the ministry of every deputy without exception who had visited those parts."*

Of another district it is said, "The Lord has been pleased to bless the labours of His servants very peculiarly. . . . A time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord came, and almost at the same time, in different places of that wide-spread district, many came under concern for their souls. The whole aspect of the people was changed, they eagerly hastened to the preaching of the word, old and young together seemed deeply affected. Meetings for prayer sprung up on every side. Family worship begun where it had never been, and men spake often one to another of the things of God. The impression reached over a great extent of country, and eye-witnesses declare that you would scarcely have gone to any part of the whole district without finding ample proof of the remarkable change."†

The Disruption in Canada was thus a memorable event leading to results which deserve to be gratefully recorded in the religious history of the country.

In the more distant colonies of Australia and New Zealand, the course of events may be more briefly noticed.

At first the Australian Synod, by a majority, resolved to adhere equally to the Scottish Establishment and to the Free Church,‡ but finding that this would put them out of connection

* Blue Book, 1848, p. 180. † *Ibid.* p. 172.
‡ *Ibid.* 1845, p. 167.

with both, they resolved to continue in fellowship with the Establishment, and so to retain their Government allowances. When the resolution was come to at Sydney (October, 1846), after a painful discussion extending over three days, there was a Disruption. Three ministers—afterwards joined by a fourth —laid their protest on the table, retired to an upper room, and there, with two adhering elders, formed themselves into the "Synod (Free) of Australia." * At the same time Mr. Forbes, of Melbourne, resigned his State connection, and the following year united with Mr. Hunter, late of Launcestown, Mr. Hastie, of Buninyong, and Mr. Gordon, of Adelaide, in forming a second Synod in the south.

They were certainly a small company to lay the foundations of the Free Presbyterian Church in those widely-extended countries, but it was wonderful with what zeal the laity took up the cause.

Of the Disruption ministers from Scotland, the first to land on these shores was Mr. Salmon from Paisley, who went to Sydney. No sooner was his arrival known than he wrote, "I have letters from all parts of the country, and personal calls from settlers urging their necessities and claims on the Free Church. At one place the people are chiefly men of education, and they offer at once to build a manse, and ensure an income of £300 a-year. At another, some wealthy Scotch settlers had previously raised £220 to build in connection with the Establishment, but they at once transferred their contributions to the Free Church, and one of them gave three-quarters of an acre for church and manse with garden, and when I saw it, the peaches, plums, and nectarines were growing luxuriantly." From yet another place, "The leading man called on me this week. He had built a beautiful little church; the Establishment party expected he would give it them, but he told me he would make it over to the Free Church as soon as we could give him the model-deed."

Thus the Disruption of the Scottish Church was stirring the hearts of men to the ends of the earth. The only limit to the extension of the Free Church seems to have been the number of men whom she could send out.

* Blue Book, 1847, p. 102.

It is impossible to trace here the future progress of these Churches. The gold discoveries changed at once the whole aspect of the colonies. Men flocked in thousands to the centre of attraction, and to provide them with the means of grace ten young preachers were sent out in 1853, having at their head two ministers of high standing, Dr. Cairns of Cupar, and Dr. Mackay of Dunoon.

When Dr. Cairns arrived in Melbourne he was welcomed at a public meeting—one of the largest ever held in the city—and without delay began his work by delivering a powerful address. One who was present proposed that those who were willing should at once meet in the session-room for practical purposes. A crowd followed, a committee was named, and about £900 subscribed. "Next evening we met, and resolved that we should not wait for an iron church, but so soon as a site could be obtained, we would erect a wooden church. This was commenced on the 1st of November, and to-morrow the 20th it is to be opened—that's Colonial—and a most delightful comfortable church it is, the pulpit covered with blue, and candles all ready for the evening service." The result was that one of the most important congregations in the colonies was at once formed, and Dr. Cairns entered on a ministry the influence of which was destined to be felt as a power for good in Victoria, and all over Australia. To this we shall afterwards refer.

In Tasmania similar steps had been taken at an earlier period. Dr. Nicolson was one of the men of the Disruption. He resigned, in 1843, the living of Ferry-Port-on-Craig near Dundee, was subsequently invited to form a congregation at Hobart Town; and, on landing, he received a warm welcome from a numerous company of friends. The large hall which had been engaged for public worship, soon became overcrowded. Within sixteen months of his arrival, a handsome church, to contain 750 sitters, was erected. The opening collection amounted to £170; and within a few days almost every sitting was let. "I suspect," Dr. Nicolson wrote at the time, "few of our friends at home can imagine anything so elegant in this distant land." Indeed, down to the present day, the tower of his church is one of the leading architectural features of that now flourishing

city. Still more gratifying is it to find him in a recent letter (1879) speaking of his long ministry in Hobart Town as "a period of much concord, and, I humbly think, of much spiritual profit." After referring to the uninterrupted outward success which all along has attended the congregation, he adds: "I am far from taking it for granted that outward prosperity is evidence of spiritual prosperity, but it is to be gratefully acknowledged that there have been many encouraging evidences of spiritual good as the result of our labours. On a calm review of all the circumstances of my ministerial life since the exciting times of the Disruption, I feel warranted to say, with thankful and adoring praise: "What hath the Lord wrought!"

In New Zealand there was something still more remarkable in the course of events. The civil authorities had resolved to try a system of "Class Colonies." The Episcopalians were to have the Province of Canterbury, with the town of Christchurch, all to themselves, while the Province of Otago was made over to the Presbyterians, and put into the hands of the Free Church. A body of emigrants, accordingly, from the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland sailed from the Clyde, having at their head one of the Disruption ministers, who had resigned the parish of Monkton, Mr. Burns already referred to, the nephew of the great poet. In March, 1848, they reached Otago, on a Saturday afternoon, landed at Dunedin, and next day, at twelve o'clock, began those religious services which ever since have been regularly observed. The first six years were a time of severe toil, but Mr. Burns was the right man in the right place, caring faithfully for the settlers in their religious interests, and ready to counsel and aid them in all the affairs of colonial life. Dunedin was his headquarters; but as the population spread, he dispensed religious ordinances among the outlying settlements. Dr. Nicolson, on his way to Hobart Town in 1851, stayed two months with him, and has described the work: "Dunedin, now (1879) a fine city, consisted only of a few wooden cottages erected amongst the native flax. Among the interesting incidents of my residence there, was a visit to the Taieri Plain, then a great open and nearly uninhabited expanse. The only human habitations were two sheep stations,

about five miles apart. I was accompanied by three guides, all of us on horseback, and reached the first station on a Saturday afternoon. The station consisted of a single tent of one apartment. There we remained for the night, and next morning proceeded to the other station, to which notice had been previously sent to have all their people collected for a religious service. We made up a congregation of thirteen persons, to whom I preached the Gospel. This may reasonably be reckoned the first time the Gospel had been preached in that region. That place, then a wilderness, has now a thriving population and two Presbyterian churches."

It was in 1854 that Mr. Burns was joined by two fellow-labourers—Messrs. Will and Bannerman—a Presbytery was constituted, the affairs of the Church took shape, and its subsequent history has been one of steady advancement. At last in 1866 a Synod was formed, and Dr. Burns—the honorary degree of D.D. having been conferred on him by the University of Edinburgh — in delivering the opening address, briefly sketched the progress which had been made.

That day, he declared, was the consummation of the leading aim of the last twenty-two years of his life. The first year after their arrival, the population of the Province of Otago had been 444. In 1864 there was a population of 57,104. For six years he had stood alone, the solitary minister of religion ; now he saw around him a whole Synod of brethren, consisting of three Presbyteries. They had been conducting an experiment full of interest —the transplanting of an entire section of the home Presbyterianism of Scotland into a new country. He had seen it done—had seen the settlers, with little or no capital, and no resources but the indomitable perseverance of their own Scottish hearts, and the sturdy strokes of their own brawny Scottish arms, turn the wilderness into a fruitful field. And all the time they had never relaxed in the higher task of making provision for the ordinances of religion and the education of the young.* As the population of Dunedin increased, strangers had come in, yet the stillness of the Sabbath, and their churches

* During the first six years they had only one minister, but they set up *four* schools.

filled with earnest hearers, were the subject of remark by visitors from neighbouring colonies.

"Fathers and brethren," he said in closing, "let it be our part, through the grace of God, to realise to our own hearts the grandeur of that work to which, in God's providence, we have been called in these utmost parts of the earth, to bear our testimony in behalf of the whole circle of Divine truth in its integrity, and of Christian worship in its purity, for the glory of God and the advancement of undefiled religion."

The rapid view which we have thus taken of the colonial field may give some idea of what the Free Church had to do in this department of her work. The story of the Disruption with its details of trial and self-sacrifice, seems fairly to have touched the hearts of Scotchmen all over the world, awakening the memories of former days, and calling forth their desires after a higher life. From all lands they were stretching forth their hands to the Free Church, the Church of their fathers, asking her aid. Never since the days of the Apostles did any Church have greater opportunities. The colonies of Great Britain encircle the earth—the outlying portions of that empire on which the sun never sets—and all over these regions there were doors of usefulness set open, and men eagerly pleading for help. No one could look at such a spectacle without the feeling of solemn responsibility. These colonies were infant kingdoms, the empires of the future, and on their religious condition must depend the destinies, for time and eternity, of millions yet unborn. It was to the Free Church of Scotland many of their people were looking.

Dr. John Bonar, formerly of Larbert, was set apart to take charge of the colonial work, a man singularly fitted for his position, whose name is destined to be held in grateful remembrance in many a home of these distant lands. As years went on, the demands of the colonists and the efforts of the Church increased, but to show what was done it may be enough to take the statement of 1849:—"This year," the report runs, "we have administered funds to the extent of £6000, and have found the money little enough to carry forward the work that has come to our

hand. In the course of these few years we have been able to send upwards of sixty labourers to the Colonial field, and to lend for a longer or shorter time nearly fifty more. We have seen the Church of Canada, under our fostering help, double its numbers, and again hastening to do the same. We have seen different portions of the field blessed with times of special refreshing. . . . We have seen one college rising in the far West, and promising soon to equal those from which it sprang. We have seen a second ready to follow its onward path, and we have seen preparations making for a third, in a yet more distant country."*

The trials and toils, however, of colonial work will be best understood by attending to the actual experience of those who were engaged in it. To show how laborious the struggle often was, it may be enough if we take the account which Dr. Cairns of Melbourne gives of what had to be done on his arrival.

His parting from Scotland had been a trial. "It is with peculiar pain," he had said in the General Assembly, "that I take leave, as I must now do, of the Free Church—the Church of my heart, my affections, and my hopes—the Church of my country and my God." It was a sacrifice, but at the call of duty it was unreservedly made.

On reaching Melbourne we have seen how he threw himself into the work of his congregation. The Synod to which he belonged at once put much of its most important business into his hands. "I was immediately appointed," he says, "Convener of the Committees on Union; on Education; on the Scotch College; on an incipient Divinity Hall; and, in addition, I had to join in promoting the Benevolent Institutions in Melbourne, while busy with my work as minister of Chalmers' Church. The labour was heavy, and the effect after a time disastrous. For twelve years my 'rest' was about four hours out of the twenty-four. In December, 1864, my old complaint returned, my nervous system gave way, and ever since I have been half an invalid, and now and then, a whole one."†

But all this was not in vain. "By his marked strength and individuality of character, he succeeded in rapidly bringing

* Blue Book, 1849, p. 142.

† Letter to his friend, Rev. G. Divorty, 11th August, 1880.

about a great change in the prospects of his Church in Victoria. His eloquence and earnestness soon won him a large congregation. Mainly by his efforts the Union of the Presbyterian bodies was effected—the Scotch College was built and carried on—provision for education made—young men trained for the ministry—and much other important work done for the social, religious, and intellectual advancement of the colony.*

When health broke down, his congregation arranged for his returning to Scotland, and taking rest for a year, his brethren volunteering with one consent to take charge of his pulpit.

He appeared in the General Assembly where his speech produced a deep impression. The following extracts will enable the reader, better than anything else, to judge of his work and its results.

"After a long and interesting voyage, which has refreshed me not a little, I am here to my own surprise. Edinburgh seems to me more beautiful than ever. I have seen a little of her surroundings, and her manifold improvements have filled me with admiration. Edinburgh is a delectable city, the queen of cities. And this Assembly Hall is a new thing to me. I had heard of it, but now I see it. It is elegant, commodious, comfortable. It speaks of your progress, and is, I hope, the symbol of your stability. But my affections go back to good old Canonmills, and that famous hall which God did Himself provide for His faithful witnesses in the memorable day of the Disruption.

"Twelve years have rolled away since I bade you farewell. I went with your Commission, in the very height of the prodigious stream of emigration, to Victoria, consequent on the discovery of the gold-fields, to do what I could to provide for the spiritual wants of our people, and to co-operate with others in building up our Presbyterian cause in that far distant land. I have now returned as it were to report progress—to tell how your Commission has fared in the hands of those to whom it was confided. Well, I have seen many strange and many wonderful things, I have seen a city, little better than a

* From a detailed statement in *The Age* newspaper, Melbourne, 31st January, 1881.

collection of hovels built of brick, of wood, of zinc, of corrugated iron, of canvas, of lath and plaster, of wattle and daub, rise and expand into the form and dimensions, with something of the beauty and something of the splendour, of a magnificent metropolis. I have seen a state of social anarchy and utter confusion give place to one of order and comfort—the certain proof of a thriving and, I hope, upon the whole, a very promising young commonwealth. I have seen a population of 70,000 or 80,000 multiplied eight times. I have seen a country, whose only roads were bush-tracts, intersected with railways of admirable construction. I have witnessed also the origin and development of those philanthropic institutions which attend the progress of Christian civilisation; hospitals for the sick and maimed; refuges for the destitute and helpless; asylums for the orphan and stranger, the deaf and dumb, &c. I have assisted at the setting up and establishing of a system of common schools, which has ripened into a liberally supported educational system, almost commensurate with the necessities of the population. Alongside of this national scheme for the education of all, there are well-appointed and ably conducted grammar schools, of which the most popular and most prosperous is our own Scotch College, under the efficient management of Mr. Morrison. And this educational edifice is crowned, as it ought to be, with a university built at great cost, with a competent staff of professors, with ample means and very considerable pretensions. But more interesting to this audience will be an account of our religious operations. Twelve years ago there were in the colony just fourteen Presbyterian members of all sections. These were divided amongst themselves, weakened each other's hands, and embarrassed each other's movements. Now the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the United Church, consists of ninety-four ministers, ordained and settled in charges, together with ten at the disposal of our Home Mission and eligible for calls, and two missionaries—one to the Chinese and one to the Aborigines. The word 'charge' has a more extensive meaning with us than with you. Here it signifies a single congregation, the cure of souls of one minister. We have similar charges in the colony. In our towns, generally

speaking, our ministers are pastors of single congregations. But our towns are few in number, and outside of them in the Bush, as we call the country, the charge assigned to one minister includes a district often as large as the bounds of one of your Presbyteries. Within these limits he is not simply the pastor of a flock, but a planter of churches. His office is more that of an apostolic missionary than of an ordinary minister. He is the originator and fosterer of two, or three, or many congregations; and when fit for the work, and earnestly devoted to it, he sees the promise fulfilled as the fruit of his own labours, 'the wilderness and the solitary place made glad, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.'"

Such was the work to which Dr. Cairns invited his younger brethren. But not for a moment did he conceal the sacrifice of natural feeling which it demanded. The tear was in his eye, and in the eyes of many around him, as he told the Assembly how no distance of time or place could weaken the love he bore to his native land. "O happy Scotland, highly favoured of God! No country can compare with thee, either as to the riches of Gospel privileges, or of names that are so many towers of strength. Let no one suppose that lapse of time or remoteness of position has cooled or tended to cool the ardour of my devotion to my native land. No, Scotland is dearer to me than ever. I love every feature of her countenance, every line and nook and point of her varied and beautiful scenery. Dear to me are her mountains and hills, her glens and straths, her lochs and rivers, her mossy waters and wimpling burns, her bonny haughs and heathery braes; dear to me are the voices of her nature, the song of her birds and the murmur of her streams. . . . But immeasurably dearer is Scotland to me for her noble army of martyrs and confessors—from Hamilton, from Wishart, from him of the lion heart and the eagle eye, the fervent, the sagacious, the prophetic, the indomitable Knox, down through a long and illustrious succession of burning and shining lights of whom the world was not worthy; to him, in many respects, the brightest of them all, the champion of all righteousness and goodness and truth—that tongue of fire, that old man

eloquent, the beneficent, the gracious, the incomparable Chalmers. To these men of God and their associates, to their sanctified wisdom, to their self-denying lives, to their wrestling prayers, Scotland is indebted for her marvellous prosperity, for her peerless and imperishable renown. In that far-off region of the earth from which I have come to visit you, I have often experienced the agony of home sickness, a vehement craving for my native country. At times nature has reasserted her former sway. Feeling has broken loose in a tide of emotion that has quite overwhelmed me. Busy memory has recalled some fondly loved face or form, some dear friends or happy scenes, or perhaps some line or verse of a ballad has haunted me like a fairy.

> "'Oh! why left I my hame? Why did I cross the deep?
> Why left I the land where my forefathers sleep?
> I sigh for Scotia's shore, and I gaze across the sea;
> But I canna get a blink o' my ain countrie.'

"But truth is stronger and better than sentiment, and the love of Christ is at once sweeter and more constraining than any tie or sympathy of nature. My choice is Australia; my deliberate choice is Australia. I will soon go back never to return, with no wish to return, because I believe such is the will of the Lord. There He hath appointed me to labour for Him. There is the sphere of my ministry, the home of my children, and by-and-by in its soil this anxious body will find a quiet tomb. In that sunny land I expect and wish to spend the remainder of my days in serving the Lord as He shall enable me, and as a fellow-worker with others in opening up and preparing the way for the coming of the great King, to take possession of His own, for the ends of the earth are His by the promise of the eternal covenant. Bind Thy sword upon Thy thigh Thou most Mighty, with Thy Glory and Thy Majesty; and ride on, ride on prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness."*

* Blue Book, 1865. Address by Dr. Cairns. Appendix to Colonial Report.

XLII. External Progress.

While the Free Church was thus doing her work at the ends of the earth, she was receiving accessions to her strength in Scotland, and it may be interesting to compare these Colonial experiences with what was taking place about the same time in the midst of our home population. The steady increase in the number of adhering congregations and ministers is one of the most remarkable facts in the Church's history.

We have already seen how from the first the number of the outgoing ministers was far greater than the world had expected. Some additional indications of this may be given; they meet us in many different quarters.

"The venerable Principal of one of our Universities," says Mr. Cowan (formerly M.P. for Edinburgh), "whose deep sepulchral voice I well remember in the Assembly, thirty-five years ago sounded like that of an oracle, was said to have replied to the question put by Government as to the extent of the impending exodus—'Five must, ten may, but twenty never!'"*

The biographer of Dr. Cunningham states: "One gentlemanly Moderate known to me, and still alive (1871), declared from the pulpit in the public service on the Sabbath day, in a populous burgh town, that he would *eat* all the ministers who came out."†

Another of the brethren in a rural parish expressed a similar resolution: "I'll eat a' that come oot." "When this boast," Mr. Cowan states, "was mentioned to Dr. Chalmers a few days before the Disruption, he laughed most heartily, and sent a message through me to the rev. gentleman to congratulate him on the prospect of a plentiful meal. On the day of the Dis-

* Reminiscences by Charles Cowan, Esq. (private circulation), p. 309.

† Life of Dr. Cunningham, p. 191.

ruption I walked down to Holyrood, having frequently in former years attended the levees of Her Majesty's Commissioners as I have done since; but on this occasion, in view of the cruel robbery about to be inflicted by the Government upon the Church and the people of Scotland, I had not the heart to enter the ancient palace, but turned my back upon it and walked slowly and sadly up the Canongate. When at the Tron Church, which was open, I met the rev. gentleman, above referred to, and in the porch delivered to him Dr. Chalmers' congratulatory message, his reply was: 'Did I really say that? I dinna mind, but it's very like me. But I hope I'm no bund to eat them a' at ainee.'"*

When ministers spoke thus of their brother ministers, it is no wonder if the laity were equally incredulous.

Dr. Burns of Kilsyth refers to the factor who acted for a leading proprietor in the parish. He "had often said that when it came to the point, few, excepting the noted men in Edinburgh, would give up their situations, to whom from their popularity it would be a small sacrifice, although he did the writer the justice or the honour of allowing that he would very likely go out after what he had heard him say. The teacher of the school adjacent to the factor's dwelling had conversed with him frequently on the subject, and on the evening of the Disruption was invited to come over next morning when the letters and newspapers should arrive so as to get the earliest news. While Mr. —— was opening his letters he threw the *Herald* to Mr. Towers, and in a few moments after asked, 'Well, what about the ministers'? When Mr. T. gave him the intelligence he said not a word, but his visage told how strange and how strong were the emotions produced."†

In Sutherland, Mr. Mackenzie of Farr describes a similar scene between two neighbouring country gentlemen, one favourable, and the other opposed to the Free Church. The latter had been accustomed to say: "Wait till it comes to the test, and these Convocation ministers will find a loophole to get through, so as to hold their livings." On the day when the news was expected

* Reminiscences, pp. 309, 310.

† Disr. Mss. xxix. p. 29.

to arrive, this gentleman was entertaining his friend at dinner; and when the papers came in conveying the intelligence, he "was quite astounded" on looking over the list, and asked the other, "You always said this would be the case—what was your ground for believing it?" "I believed it," was the reply, "because I believed the Convocation ministers to be honest men."

But while the first aspect which the Free Church presented was thus far beyond what men had looked for, yet many of the opponents clung to the idea that it was only a temporary outburst of hot zeal, and would soon cool down; and that as the men of the Disruption died out, the Church would soon dwindle into feebleness, and lose her hold of the people. Not such were the anticipations of her leading men. Dr. Candlish, at Glasgow, five months after the Disruption, was forecasting what the position of the Free Church should be at the end of the first year's experience of her disestablished position. "I trust that by next May the Church will exhibit to the country and the world the aspect of a settled and confirmed institute, and that we shall proceed to the discharge of our business as if we had met with no interruption. The connexion of the Church with the State is to be viewed as a comparatively accidental circumstance. The essence of a Church consists in her relation to her Great Head; . . . and it will be a noble spectacle which, under God, the Free Church may exhibit to all Christendom, when it is seen that she has sustained the shock of separation from the State without staggering under the blow—that she has gone on, majestically I would almost say, under the guidance of her Great Head, on her own straightforward course, and after the lapse of a brief year she is found in all her order and regularity, without State support, as regularly and effectually working as when she enjoyed the smiles of the great."*

To a large extent these anticipations were realised. But there remained the question of Church extension on the part of the Free Church. She would never rest satisfied, it was declared, until she had planted a church in every district of Scotland, "and completely re-established by the voluntary

* Dr. Candlish, Assembly Proceedings, Glasgow, p. 166.

contributions of the people what was recently the Established Church of Scotland." *

In 1867 Dr. R. Buchanan looks back to 1843, and marks the position of the Church "after nearly a quarter of a century has passed away." It would "tax the powers of some future Church historian to sum up and describe the results" which had been attained — "nearly a thousand churches built, and almost as many manses and schools; nearly a thousand congregations formed, and as many ministers and missionaries sustained all over the length and breadth of the land; in a word, the whole equipment of a Christian Church set up and provided for, with its theological halls for the training of candidates for the ministry, its missions to the heathen and to the Jew, and to our own expatriated countrymen in every quarter of the world. In view of all this, not we ourselves only, but onlookers outside of us, have been constrained to say—What hath God wrought!" †

Thus it was in 1867. In the following table, however, the reader will see at a glance how the Church has been strengthening her position—how the number of her congregations and of her ordained ministers has gone on progressively advancing at every stage of her history since 1843.

* *Missionary Record*, 1848, p. 463.
† Blue Book, 1867, p. 180.

[TABLE.

TABLE SHOWING THE PROGRESSIVE INCREASE OF ORDAINED MINISTERS IN THE FREE CHURCH.

YEAR.	No. of Ministers.		
1844	583		
1845	627		
1846	672	Average during the first five years, . .	647
1847	673		
1848	684		
1849	705		
1850	720		
1851	736	Average during the second five years, . .	733
1852	745		
1853	759		
1854	765		
1855	786		
1856	790	Average during the third five years, . .	795
1857	811		
1858	825		
1859	827		
1860	846		
1861	859	Average during the fourth five years, . .	857
1862	872		
1863	885		
1864	894		
1865	903		
1866	902	Average during the fifth five years, . .	907
1867	917		
1868	923		
1869	942		
1870	947		
1871	948	Average during the sixth five years, . .	952
1872	957		
1873	969		
1874	975		
1875	997		
1876	1014	Average during the seventh five years, . .	1024
1877	1059		
1878	1075		

It should be explained that a few invalided ministers, who have retired from active duty, are included in these lists, but they do not materially affect the results. Thus in 1879 there were 1094 ministers on the list, of whom 54 were invalided, leaving 1040 in active service. A similar proportion will be found in the previous years.

XLIII. The Disruption in Glenisla.

Thus steadily was the Church going forward to occupy the field which had been marked out for her in Scotland. As one example of how this was done, we may refer to what took place at Glenisla, a retired country district among the mountains of Forfarshire.

At one time the parish had enjoyed the services of Mr. Martin, one of the most gifted and devoted ministers in the Church. He was afterwards translated to Edinburgh, and died minister of St. George's, where he succeeded Dr. Andrew Thomson, and preceded Dr. Candlish. "The fruits of his ministry," it is said, "remain unto this day (1881) in Glenisla."*

In the Glen there were several estates, the proprietors of which resided on their own lands, and had great influence among the people. One of those gentlemen, Mr. M'Kenzie of Alrick, an elder of the Church, has given a narrative which enables us clearly to follow the course of events, and of this we shall freely avail ourselves in a form somewhat condensed.

The conflict which ended in 1843, Mr. M'Kenzie states, was unknown and uncared for in their quiet glen. They were like the men of Laish, living quiet and secure, among the fastnesses of their Grampian mountains, and not wishing that the troublers of Israel should come among them.

There was a man among us, he goes on to tell, who "was like to lose the sight of one of his eyes. He had heard of a Dr. Irving, somewhere near Moulin, and asked a friend to accompany him to this eye doctor, for it was reported that he had cured many, and could restore sight to those who were nearly blind. Well, on the 10th of May, 1840, these two friends set out, over hill and dale, on their way to the famous oculist—one

* Disr. Mss. lxxxvi.

of them nearly blind of an eye, and both of them mentally blind as to Church matters; but they got a little light before they came home. They found the doctor, got the prescription, stayed all night as it was late; and on their way home next day, as they came through Kirkmichael, who should be standing on the street but Mr. Drummond, the minister. They both knew him, and often heard him preach in his own church on sacramental occasions, and they both liked him well, as a good preacher. He frankly spoke to them, and among other things asked about Church matters in their parish. They told him they took no interest in these things, that they thought these contendings did much hurt to religion, and let him know that in their glen they stood neutral. He rather sharply said, 'What sort of men are you, to take no interest in matters like these?' for he was a man of hasty temper. He told us there could be no neutrality, and 'what are you, but Judases and traitors to act in this manner?' He asked if there had been no public meetings in their parish, and they told him there had been none. They both made for going on their way, for they did not wish to anger the minister, nor yet to dispute with him. However, he said, 'Come into the manse with me, and I will tell you something about these things, and if you will be ruled by me, I will give you some directions how to do when you go home.' They followed him into the manse, and he took them into a large room and shut the door, and then he gave them a long lecture on the evils of patronage, the harm it had done, and how many gross intrusions had taken place under it. He also told them that matters had come to a crisis, and that now either the Church must submit to have the Government and Court of Session for its head, or renounce its connection with the State. For himself, his mind was made up, and that he would rather leave manse, stipend, and glebe, and preach on the hill sides, as our forefathers had done, than betray the Church. He walked from side to side of his room in great agitation, till his cloak had nearly fallen from his shoulders, while they sat silently listening, never venturing to speak or contradict. Indeed, they saw so much good reason in what he said, that they both felt inclined to cast in their lot with the good man. He, seeing he had so far gained his point with them,

said, 'I will tell you what you must do. I will get you two petitions, and you will first go to your minister and get him, if possible, to sign them first. But, as you have never heard from him about these matters, it is likely he will be of the opposite side. However, do not lose your temper with your minister, but tell him plainly that you see matters in a different light than he does, and go through the whole parish, and get the petitions as numerously signed as possible, and sent up to Parliament.' They told him they had no objections to do what he said, provided their own minister was agreeable, but they did not like to do anything in opposition to him, for they were sure it would breed much sore feeling and division."

How the minister opposed and resisted this movement is fully told, and how they, on the other hand, with Scottish pertinacity, carried out what they had once begun.

Fuller information soon began to reach the glen, and among other things, they had a visit from Mr. M'Cheyne. Several years before, some of the people had gone to Dundee and urged him to come to preach in Glenisla—a request which he was obliged to decline, knowing that the parish minister would be hostile. In the beginning of 1843, however, he unexpectedly made his appearance; and when he came into the parish, he said that he felt as if he stood on consecrated ground—it was the place where Mr. Martin had laboured. Application was made to the parish minister for the use of the church on a week-day, that Mr. M'Cheyne might preach to the people. As Mr. Watt stood at the manse door, however, he said, "Well, I'll be very candid with you; he shall never preach in my pulpit." Again the church was asked for, as a great favour, with the assurance that no discussion would take place, and that only a sermon would be preached. He replied, "Mr. M'Cheyne had plenty of work to do in Dundee, without raising divisions in quiet parishes." This refusal was felt to be a great disappointment, after Mr. M'Cheyne had come so far, in such cold and stormy weather, on the 10th of January, 1843. He had, however, to be told, that "we could not get the church for him, and, at the same time, we stated that we were exceedingly sorry at these divisions, as we feared they might do much hurt. He said in reply,

'These are the best things that have happened in our day,' and that he believed they would do much good. He let us know that there was nothing to be looked for but a breaking up of Church and State; and, he added, 'the next time I come to Glenisla, I will preach in the open air, and we will see who will join our new church.' While we were thus talking a man came into the room, and he said to him in a very solemn manner: 'Well, what do you think of yourself?' The man said: 'I think I am a stony-ground hearer;' and oh! can we ever forget with what a solemn look and manner he addressed him, and warned him of his danger? The neighbouring church at Lintrathen was then got, where Mr. M'Cheyne preached to a crowded congregation from the words: 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' This was among the last journeys of Mr. M'Cheyne. He died soon after, and we never saw him more. Some among us had got their eyes opened to see what was impending over the Church, and were alarmed at what might be the result; but felt inclined to cast in our lot with those whom we believed to be faithful ministers, whatever the consequences might be."

In the month of May following, Mr. G. Brown, afterwards of Castle-Douglas, a deputy from the Committee of Convocation, appeared, and held a public meeting in the glen, but his statements seem to have been stronger than the people were prepared for. It was putting new wine, Mr. M'Kenzie says, into old bottles. At an adjourned meeting, only six gave in their names as adherents — Messrs. John M'Kenzie, John Donald, James Cargill, John Grant, William Gellatly, and John Stewart,—a very small beginning for a church and congregation.

While these things were going on, "we heard that the Disruption had taken place; and now we were at a dead stand. To go back to the Established Church we would not, and we had nowhere else to go. John Grant had a child to baptise, and a note was written to the Rev. Mr. Macdonald of Blairgowrie, informing him of the state of matters, and asking him if he would come to our glen to advise with us and preach, and to baptise the child. Some of us had heard him, and most of us had heard of him, as his fame was spread far and wide. He let

us know that he would come, and desired intimation to be made. We were all lifted up with the thought that he was to come, and there was a great out-turn of the people to hear him. After singing and prayer, he read out the text (Acts viii. 1-4): 'At that time there was a great persecution, . . . therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word.' Those of us who had given our names were thrilled with joy when we heard the text read out. Long as we had wished the people of Glenisla to hear that man of God, Mr. M'Cheyne, and much as we were disappointed, now beyond our expectations Mr. Macdonald had come to meet them face to face, and was to preach to them. It was a calm summer evening, about the 4th of June, we were full of the highest hopes that it would be a night to be remembered, and we were not disappointed. He told us, among other things, that had it not been for the persecution of Jerusalem, the apostles and believers did not seem to have had any desire to separate, but that the persecution spread them all abroad. God overruled the wrath of man for good. He had no doubt that the Disruption of the Church of Scotland would be overruled for good to many a dark place in the land. He encouraged those who had given in their names, and exhorted all to acknowledge Christ as Head of the Church, both by word and deed. We asked where we should go to church now, and what we had to do. We offered a site for a church and manse, and three or four acres of ground for a glebe, if only we could get a minister. Mr. Macdonald said, 'We will go over to Mr. Ferguson at Drumfork, and see what number of adherents are there.' After consultation, it was arranged that a station should be opened at Cray, to suit Glenisla, Blackwater, and Glenshee. Mr. Macdonald did us much good by this visit. He was dearly loved by all the people, and he promised to befriend us every way in his power, advising us to get as many adherents as possible. The more adherents we had, there was the better chance of our speedily getting a minister.

"While these things were going on amongst us, we heard that Mr. Brown, who came to us at the first, had gone to visit Kirkmichael, and asked Mr. Drummond's permission to hold a meeting in his church. This was granted on condition that

Mr. Drummond should have a right to reply. Accordingly, after Mr. Brown's address, Mr. Drummond arose, and forbade the hearers giving their adherence to the Free Church. There was an angry discussion, which had, no doubt, a bad effect upon many. However, a good number gave in their names, and left their minister, who had been their leader in the Non-Intrusion question, but now, in the time of need, had deserted them. We, in our glen, when we heard of these things, wished very much to see him again, to hear what he would say for himself. He had called us Judases and traitors for not taking any active hand in the beginning of the struggle ; but now in the day of battle he himself had faintly turned back. 'Let him who thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.' Mr. Brown called upon us again, and told us what a strange man Mr. Drummond was ; that after all their disputings in the church, he took him into the manse and lodged him all night, and was kind and courteous. Our own minister did not fail to tell us of Mr. Drummond, in whom we had so much confidence, and so rashly followed his advice, how he had given us the slip himself in the time of need. Notwithstanding all this, we were convinced from the Word that the people had the right to choose their own minister. The only thing we regretted was, we had so few adherents, and that Cray was too far from us, and that the distance would be a great barrier to many joining us.

"Soon after this, there were some devoted, faithful ministers who made their appearance in the glen—viz., Messrs. Bain, Edgar, Brown, and others. They preached for the most part in the open air, when the weather permitted, for the people flocked to hear them, and we could get no house that would hold the congregation. Mr. Bain was dearly loved by all who heard him, but he had got a call to Coupar-Angus before we were in circumstances to have a minister. Mr. W. Brown was appointed for a number of weeks to labour amongst us. He was not so popular as a preacher, but a most devoted, prayerful man, best loved by those who were most intimately acquainted with him."

The sacrament was dispensed at the barn in Cray, when Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Gillies, and Mr. Bonar from Collace assisted, much to the delight and edification of the people who flocked

together, and those that the barn could not contain stood in the open air. James Cargill, one of the six who first gave in their names in Glenisla, called upon Mr. Watt, the parish minister, for a certificate in order to communicate at Cray, and was duly furnished with it. In the evening, however, the minister thought better of it, and sent David Clark, the minister's-man, to demand it back, with a letter to Mr. Cargill's father, stating that upon further reflection he was convinced he did wrong in giving his countenance to any one to join with those who have separated from the Church of their forefathers "without any sufficient reason that I can see, and I think I am conscientious. I hope, therefore, you will give back the certificate to the bearer." A few sentences from Mr. Cargill's reply may be quoted as showing the intelligence of these humble parishioners. "We have returned the certificate, according to your request, but we wonder much to hear you say, that you see no reason for leaving what you term the Church of our forefathers. We think we are only clinging to the Church of our forefathers, the Church of the Reformation, the Church which the Covenanters, Richard Cameron, Donald Cargill, Renwick, and others suffered and shed their blood for. Was it not for this one point they suffered, that Christ is the Head of the Church, and not the King nor Court of Session? and we hope you will give us credit when we say, that we also think ourselves conscientious in leaving the Established Church now, and joining ourselves with those who are at liberty to legislate for themselves, without any interference from the civil rulers, rather than submit to Lord Aberdeen's Act, as the Established Church has now done."

While matters were thus going on at Cray, "we were not idle at Glenisla. We fitted up, as a place of worship, a large empty house, and we got forms made, and a pulpit placed, and stipulated to have a sermon once in three weeks, if not once a fortnight. Mr. Brown often came over in the afternoon, after preaching in Glenshee, but few adherents came to him, so we felt very discouraged and disheartened. We were few in number—about a score—we were laughed at by the opposite party, called 'Nons' and rebels, rebelling against the law of the land. Nevertheless, we heeded not, but went to Cray regularly,

and had sermon in our own glen occasionally. Matters went on in this way for four or five years, and both parties had settled down."

About that time, however, a circumstance occurred which changed the whole aspect of affairs. A vacancy took place in the parish church, and various movements were made by the parishioners to get the man of their choice. At first there were some hopes of success, but ultimately they were disappointed.

So long as the vacancy lasted, there was preaching in the parish church only on alternate Sabbaths. The Free Church adherents applied to their presbytery for a supply on the intervening Sabbaths, which was accordingly granted. The first who was appointed to come was Mr. Bain from Coupar-Angus. "There was a great out-turn, so that our large house was for the first time filled to overflow. Mr. Bain did not come, something having occurred to prevent him, but he sent Mr. Ross of Rattray: the people were highly delighted, and intimation was given at the close of the sermon, as usual, that there would be a similar service that day fortnight. Mr. White of Airlie came, and although we did not know who would come next, we yet—as the people had turned out so well both days—took it upon ourselves to intimate that a similar service would be held that day fortnight. This continued all the time that the church was vacant. Messrs. Stewart of Kirkmichael, Bain, Macdonald, and Ferguson from Alyth, all came in regular succession, and our place of worship could not nearly contain the numbers that attended."

On one occasion it had been announced that Mr. Macdonald of Blairgowrie was coming to preach. It happened to be an uncommonly stormy north wind, but the news of Mr. Macdonald's coming, had brought together a very great multitude. "We were at a loss to know what to do. At last, we thought of going to the best sheltered part of the wood. We erected a tent and tied it to trees, so that it might not be overturned. For a time there was no appearance of the minister. He had gone round by Cray, and had been detained. We were glad when we saw him coming, and we saw also Mr. Rattray of Brewlands, one of the leading heritors, and Mrs. Rattray coming

across the fields. Mr. Macdonald was a little beyond the time, and there was a very large congregation waiting him. It was very solemn to hear the voice of psalms rising from so many voices, mingling with the sound of the wind, among the tops of the trees, which brought forcibly to mind the words of the Lord: "When thou hearest the sound of a going on the tops of the mulberry trees, then thou shalt bestir thyself, for then shall the Lord go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines." When he rose to prayer, he prayed that the wind might be stayed, and it was observed in a little it had greatly subsided, and before he had finished the sermon it was almost a calm. He gave out for text Luke vii., and read from the 36th verse. This was a great day amongst us—one of the days of the Son of Man—a day which some among us will never forget. The people had come with great expectations, and they were not disappointed."

Another circumstance now occurred which had important results. The members of the Establishment had expected to be consulted as to the minister to be settled among them, when suddenly, without the least warning, an announcement appeared in the newspaper that Mr. Gibb had got the presentation, a man whom they had never seen nor heard of. "How the people were astounded at this. Two of the proprietors, Mr. Rattray, and Mr. Spalding of Broomhall, another of the leading Heritors, were determined not to submit to be used in this manner. They knew nothing about the man, nor could ascertain what kind of preacher he was, but they found out that he was a man far advanced in years, and so was unfit for a large Highland parish. Almost all the people were roused to a pitch of indignation. Mr. Spalding wrote out a petition to be laid before the Presbytery, objecting to his being settled; and as it was signed by a great majority of the people, they expected to be able to prevent the settlement."

The narrative of what took place, given by Mr. M'Kenzie, deserves notice, as illustrating the way in which Lord Aberdeen's Act was wrought at the time.

"The day came when Mr. Gibb had to make his personal appearance in the parish church. A very crowded congregation

assembled to see and hear a man about whom so much had been said and done. The seats and passages of the church were filled up. Well, the rev. gentleman at last made his appearance, and came into the church—a tall, stout man, of majestic appearance, like Saul among the people, head and shoulders above most of them, and something determined-like in his aspect. If his first appearance were anything like a criterion to judge by, his opposers might at once be led to conclude that they had to contend with one who knew his rights and would have them—a man who understood better than any of them the liberties of Lord Aberdeen's Act; liberty for him to come and be their minister at all hazards, and liberty for them to grumble and leave the church if they chose.

"There was no one, in a friendly way, to show him to the pulpit, but he was a man of firm nerve, and did not seem to care, and made his way to it through the people. He read his lecture and sermon closely, in a formal, business-like manner, and did not at all give satisfaction.

"The day came at last for the moderation of the call, and Mr. Gibb preached from these words: 'I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it,' which were thought very appropriate. After sermon, the Moderator of the Presbytery went up to the pulpit, and called on heritors, elders, and parishioners to come forward and sign Mr. Gibb's call, but there was no response made by the people. A second announcement was then made, with the same result, except a sullen look of opposition, and a smile from one to another among the people. A third call was made, when two persons rose from their seats and signed—namely, Mr. James Stewart, gamekeeper, Tulchan; and one of the elders, Mr. William M'Nicoll, who came forward, and with trembling hand, which all could see, appended his name. Not one more could be prevailed upon, notwithstanding calls and entreaties; and it was announced from the pulpit that the call was left for some days with the schoolmaster for the purpose of getting additional signatures."

The attempt to arrest the settlement of the presentee was not successful. Mr. Gibb, and a large number of the objectors, met face to face at an adjourned meeting of Presbytery held at

Meigle, when a disagreeable discussion took place, which served to convince the parishioners that they had little chance of gaining their object, and they set themselves to consider what should be done.

About that time, Mr. Stewart from Kirkmichael "came to preach in the usual place of meeting, which could not nearly contain the people, and they had just to go to the wood again. It was a cold day, but dry, and the people sat upon the ground all round about. He preached twice from the words: 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and ye are not saved.' It was a very alarming sermon. This was another of our great days among us. Many felt deeply solemnised, and the text, and the spot, and the tree under which he stood, are hallowed in the remembrance of many to the present day. . . . When they pass the place, the people will say one to another: 'Here is the tree where Mr. Stewart stood when he preached yon terrible sermon;' and then the text is repeated."

Immediately afterwards, a public notice appeared, summoning a meeting of the objectors, and of the whole of the inhabitants, to be held in the school at Glenisla, on Thursday, 4th May, 1849. "There was a large assemblage, many coming from a distance, as Glenisla matters were much noised abroad. The first thing was to vote Mr. Spalding, one of the proprietors, into the chair, but he declined, as he was of a mind to take part in the discussion, which he could not so well do were he chairman. Mr. Thomas Farquharson, farmer, Coldside, was then appointed. Mr. Spalding stood up, and began showing the evils of patronage, saying it was unscriptural, and had been a great evil from first to last, having caused all the divisions and disruptions of the Church—the Secession, Relief, and Free Church. He produced evidence of what he said, and then went on to show that as gross an intrusion was about to be perpetrated in that parish as ever had taken place, that the call of the people was a farce and a mockery; that only two among them were got to sign Mr. Gibb's call, while so many objected to his settlement; and yet, so far as any one could see, he would be settled. In such a state of things, it would be far better to leave the Established Church at once, than go up to Synod and Assembly, with a great deal of

trouble and expense, besides making a fool of themselves. His mind was made up to leave the Established Church, and it was a matter of consideration with what body they should join. He thought the minority should go in with the majority, and let no more divisions be among them. It would be very little trouble to himself to go to Alyth, but many of them could not do so, and he would be willing to do what he could for the good of the people.

"Mr. Rattray of Brewlands then stood up, and said that he had made up his mind not to sit under Mr. Gibb. He could himself go either to Lintrathen or to Persie, but he was well aware that the people could not do so, and he felt it to be his duty to remain with them, provided they left the Establishment, as he might be useful to them. Every man should be decided one way or other, and openly tell what they were resolved to do. There were three motions to be submitted that evening,—that they should join the Free Church, the Seceders, or the Independents. His wife, Mr. Spalding, and himself had made up their minds to join one or other of these Churches whichever the majority might prefer. Those who were for the Free Church, he said, would go to the back seats on the north side of the school; those who were for the Seceders should go to the seats on the south side; and another seat was pointed out for those who voted for the Independents. Let it be understood, he said, that whatever side has the majority, the minority will fall in with it. Mr. Spalding and he were to keep the middle of the house, and would fall in with the majority on whatever side that might be. Mr. Spalding added that there need be no hesitation. No man can submit to be used as we have been, and now is the time to decide. Mr. Rattray said that it would be obliging if all who did not belong to the parish would, for a few moments, retire. After they left, Mr. Rattray and Mr. Spalding went to the middle of the house, so as not to influence any one.

"This was felt to be a very interesting moment. When they were asked to take their side, the whole, with two or three exceptions, rose, and deliberately went to the seats on the north side —thus voting for the Free Church—and crowded together, so that there was not half room for them, amidst clapping of hands

and congratulations one with another. John Crombie, the innkeeper, and one or two others, took the seats for the Independents. Mr. Rattray went and asked them kindly to go over and join the others, saying he was glad to see so much good feeling. Then he said, with tears in his eyes, and almost choked with emotion, I never thought I would live to see the day when I would be forced to leave the Church of my forefathers, but now the day has come contrary to my wishes. We are driven from the Establishment by the hand of oppression. The first thing they had to do was to see where they should meet for public worship. We must immediately set about getting a tent erected. I will give you wood from East Mill, and immediately get sawyers to cut it for that purpose. Mr. Spalding will be appointed to correspond with the Free Church Presbytery as to the regular supply of preaching at the usual hours.

"Mr. Spalding rose and said,—We are now Free Kirk people by our own consent. We cannot say we left the Established Kirk with the same honour as if we had done it at the first Disruption; but we have stayed in till we have been rudely handled. Now let us act as those that are worthy of freedom. Let there be no division amongst us. We have been much indebted to the Free Church Presbytery already; and now much more may we expect their help when, by our own consent, we are united to them."

Accordingly a deputation appeared before the Presbytery, consisting of between thirty and forty of the parishioners, among whom were five of the elders, and handed in a memorial, signed by 175 persons who had been members of the Established Church, intimating their resolution to join the Free Church, and stating the grounds on which they proceeded. It was their unanimous opinion that there were 300 communicants, parishioners of Glenisla, who were prepared to join the congregation when it was formed.*

Mr. M'Kenzie continues his narrative of what went on in the Glen after the meeting in the schoolhouse.

"Mr. Bain came on the following Sabbath and preached in John Crombie's cart-shed. It was a very rainy day, and the

* Disr. Mss. lxxxvi.

shed, barn, and loft were filled, while the rest of the people stood in the open court, with plaids and umbrellas. The text was Numbers x. 29, 'Come with us, and we will do you good.' It was a precious and seasonable sermon to us, and listened to with the deepest attention, although there was no allusion to what had taken place among us.

"After sermon, the intimation was made that the Presbytery were to meet at Glenisla. This was a novelty in the Glen. The meeting was held at Alrick, and was very numerously attended, many coming from Kirriemuir, &c. It was a fine calm afternoon, with the sun shining, so that no tent was required. The people went to the side of the wood, where a table was set, and as many chairs as could be got for the ministers and strangers from a distance. Mr. Macdonald preached from these words: 'God is love.' After sermon, Mr. Stewart, of Kirkmichael, gave a condensed history of the Church from the Reformation. Mr. Bain, of Coupar-Angus, brought down the history to the Disruption, and Mr. Ferguson, from Alyth, carried it on to the present time. Mr. Brown spoke a few words, very affectingly stating how often he had gone up and down our road through the Glen, praying that a door of usefulness might be opened among us. A large sheet of paper was then spread out on the table, and all adherents to the Free Church were called to come forward and sign it, when many cheerfully put down their names, and intimation was made that those not present would have an opportunity afterwards. Steps also were taken for raising the Sustentation Fund ['and it was resolved to start at once as a self-supporting congregation, and build the church, manse, and school free of debt'].

"This was one of our greatest days—a day to be held in remembrance. None of us ever heard of an open-air meeting of Presbytery at the Glen. The large multitude was dismissed late in the evening, seemingly deeply impressed and pleased.

"A large tent was soon erected at the side of the road, and we had regular sermon at the usual hour, and the Lord's Supper was dispensed on the second Sabbath of July.

Steps were now taken for building a church. "Mr. Rattray offered a site and ground for a glebe, provided we would trench

and inclose it. He promised also to put the bell on the church, but we all knew he would do more than that.* A subscription was begun, Mr. Spalding leading the way with a sum of £20, seven of the parishioners following with £10 each. Mrs. Fordyce, from Blairgowrie, came afterwards and left £20, while many friends sent subscriptions. The building was commenced, and the church roofed in before the winter.

With the view of calling a minister, "probationers were sent to preach to us. We had got so much freedom, and such a variety of candidates, that it was feared we would want unanimity in our choice. One day Mr. Rattray, on going from home, met with Mr. Guthrie of Finhaven, who told him that there was a Mr. Simpson in Brechin whom we should hear before we fixed on any one. Accordingly he was got to come, and stayed a few weeks, after which he was unanimously chosen, and was ordained on 24th January, 1850. The day of his ordination happened to be in the midst of a very great storm and heavy fall of snow. The roads were entirely blocked up, and there was no access to the Glen; the snow in many places having drifted to a great depth. It was obvious there was no possibility of the Presbytery getting forward, and great anxiety was felt, when the day drew near, with no appearance of the weather breaking up and getting more settled. It was resolved to clear the roads by manual labour, and that could not be done a night beforehand, as one night might make them as bad as ever. Early on the day of ordination, therefore, about two score of able-bodied young men commenced work in right good earnest, and cleared the road for about four miles or thereby, till they met the Presbytery at Milnacraig, all on horseback, following each other in a straight line, and Mr. Simpson among them. All parties seemed pleased. The people were glad when they saw the ministers coming in such numbers. They had felt uncertain whether any of them would come through such a storm of snow, and with one exception all were present. The Presbytery, on the other hand, seemed greatly

* Quite a well-founded expectation. Mr. Rattray's contributions proved to be on the most liberal scale. The congregation will long have good reason gratefully to cherish his memory.

pleased that such exertions had been made by the people, as they had been doubtful of getting through the snow.

"Mr. Simpson's settlement was very cordial and harmonious. Mr. Tasker, from Edinburgh, who came on the following Sabbath to introduce him, congratulated us very much on our choice, and told us openly from the pulpit that we had been wisely guided, and that the more anyone got to know him, the more they would appreciate his worth. We have now (1865) had him labouring amidst us for fifteen years, and find that this was a true report, but that the one-half had not been told us.

"The disruption in our glen, we believe, has been one of the greatest blessings that ever happened to it. One minister said, You are the youngest daughter of the Disruption, and we have all sympathised very much with you. See that you be not like a spoiled child. When Dr. Duff, from India, visited us, he told us that, when he read in the newspapers, on the banks of the Ganges, the account of the Glenisla Disruption, he rejoiced with . . . all his heart, and Glenisla was the first place he preached in after he arrived in Scotland. His text was: 'God is love.'

"We have, in great mercy, been blessed with a time of revival and many precious meetings we have had, and many have been awakened to concern about the state of their souls and a coming eternity; and not a few, we fondly hope, have been brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. May all that we have seen and tasted in this respect be only as the small drops before the full shower!*

* Disr. Mss. lxxxvi.

XLIV. Social Standing of Free Church Ministers.

On leaving the Established Church, it was expected that parish ministers would sacrifice the influential position which they held in society, and to many of them the prospect of this change was one of the trials most keenly felt. In Scotland, indeed, Dissent has never stood in a position of social inferiority to the same extent as in England, owing, perhaps, to the fact that with us the Episcopalian clergy and laity are Dissenters. It was true, at the same time, that a certain prestige attached to those who held office in the Establishment, and it was not without reluctance that men prepared to give up their position.

It was under this aspect also that the change presented itself to those who were outside the Church. When Lord Cockburn, with his usual warmth of feeling, is describing the Disruption sacrifice, it is this loss of worldly position on which he fixes as the hardest part of the trial.

"For the present the battle is over. But the peculiar event that has brought it to a close is as extraordinary, and its consequences will probably prove as permanent as any single transaction in the history of Scotland, the Union alone excepted. The fact of above 450 clerical members of an Establishment, being above a third of its total complement, casting it off, is sufficient to startle any one who considers the general adhesiveness of Churchmen to their sect and their endowments. But when this is done under no bodily persecution, with no accession of power, from no political motive, but purely from the dictates of conscience, the sincerity of which is attested by the sacrifice not merely of professional station and emoluments, but of all worldly interests, it is one of the rarest occurrences in moral history. I know no parallel to it. There have been individuals in all ages who have defied, and even courted, martyrdom in its

most appalling forms, but neither the necessity of such a fate nor its glory have been within the view of any one in modern times, and we must appreciate recent sacrifices in reference to the security of the age for which these clergymen were trained. Such a domestic catastrophe never entered into their calculations of the vicissitudes of life." "They have abandoned that public station which was the ambition of their lives, and have descended from certainty to precariousness, and most of them from comfort to destitution, solely for their principles. And the loss of the stipend *is the least of it.* The dismantling of the manse, the breaking up of all the objects to which the hearts and the habits of the family were attached, the shutting the gate for the last time of the little garden, the termination of all their interest in the humble but respectable kirk—even all these desolations, though they may excite the most immediate pangs, are not the calamities which the head of the house finds it hardest to sustain. It is *the loss of station* that is the deep and lasting sacrifice, the ceasing to be the most important man in the parish, the closing of the doors of the gentry against him and his family, the altered prospects of his children, the extinction of everything that the State had provided for the decent dignity of the manse and its inmates. And in some views these self-immolations by the ministers are surpassed by the gallantry of the 200 probationers who have extinguished all their hopes at the very moment when the vacancies of 450 pulpits made their rapid success almost certain.

"Yet these sacrifices have been made by churchmen, and not by a few enthusiastic ones; and with no bitterness; with some just pride, but with no boasting; no weak lamentations, but easily, contentedly, and cheerfully. I have conversed with many of them, especially of the obscure country ministers, who are below all idea of being ever consoled by the fame and large congregations which may support a few of the city leaders, and their gentleness and gaiety * is inconceivable." "It is the most

* "The only regret expressed to me by the minister of a small Highland parish, a good, simple, innocent man, who had to quit the favourite manse garden, was implied in this question, 'But, my Lord, can ye tell me are thae Moderates entitled to *eat ma rizzards this summer?*'"

honourable fact for Scotland that its whole history supplies. The common sneers at the venality of our country, never just, are now absurd." *

It was in the full expectation of this sacrifice that men went forward; they had counted the cost. At once, however, it became plain that the Disruption had modified the whole relations of society in Scotland. Even worldly rank was not awanting to the new movement. Three sons of baronets were in the ministry of the Church of Scotland at the time, and one was just about to enter, and they all cast in their lot with the Free Church. Among the leading laymen of Edinburgh, the merchant princes and citizens of Glasgow, the farmers, landed proprietors and untitled gentry over Scotland, there were thousands whose adherence was enough to give weight to any cause, even in the view of the world. And along with these there were some of the noblest and most influential of our noblemen. Membership in such a Church could hardly be supposed to infer anything like social inferiority, and still more was this true when men saw how she was setting herself to do the work of God in the land.

It is true there was many a breach of social ties, and the change was sometimes painfully felt. The minister of a large city congregation, for example, had been the familiar friend of another distinguished minister in a similar position. For twenty years they had annually assisted each other on the communion Sabbath in their respective churches. When at the Disruption they took opposite sides, he of the Free Church, one of the gentlest and most lovable of men, told the writer of this, that he had sought to keep the bond of private friendship unbroken, but found that it was not to be. Once they met where he thought the barrier might have been broken down. On a foot-path along the banks of the Clyde they were walking on a summer evening, each accompanied by his wife, the one party going up and the other down the river-side. On meeting, he of the Established Church sought to pass with a distant bow, but the ladies refused to go without some friendly talk for the sake of former days. This caused a few minutes' delay, during which the Doctor of Divinity belonging to the Establishment turned

* Journal, ii. p. 29.

his back, and became intently absorbed in admiring the beauties of a very lovely landscape.

Although this breach was never healed, yet in many such cases the feeling of alienation was only temporary.

Dr. Guthrie tells how in his parochial work he had received important help from Lord Medwyn—one of the Judges of the Court of Session. Though he was a rigid Episcopalian, while Dr. Guthrie was a no less determined Presbyterian, yet they were mutually attracted to each other, and stood on the most friendly footing. After some of Dr. Guthrie's speeches on the Disruption controversy, however, he received a letter from Lord Medwyn to which it was necessary to send a firm reply.

"A few days afterwards I passed him in York Place, and, lifting my hat, got no acknowledgment of my courtesy. It was the first time in my life that I had been fairly 'cut'; and it was not a pleasant sensation. However, respecting his sterling worth, and grateful for the interest he had taken in my poor parishioners I resolved, if occasion offered, to repeat the experiment a second and even a third time, though it should be attended with no better success. Nor was it; I mentally saying as I passed him and submitting to cut the third, 'Three times is fair play. You will get no more hats from me, my lord!'

"Yet it turned out that we had not parted for ever in this world, and how that fell out, I think it due to Lord Medwyn to relate:—

"There was an extraordinary demand for sittings in Old St. John's; and, with the exception of a few pews appropriated to the office-bearers and their families, the whole area of the church was kept sacred to parishioners, and open only to them till the first Psalm was sung. Then on the doors being flung open to the general public, the throng came rushing in like a tide to fill every vacant corner of pew and passage.

"In this state of matters, a respectable-looking woman was one day ushered into my study, who came with a most earnest request that she might get a sitting in the gallery of our church —the only part of it allotted to outsiders or extra-parishioners. She would grudge no money for it. I advised her to seek a sitting elsewhere, as there were hundreds before her making similar application. She looked so much mortified and dis-

tressed that I was induced, as she opened the door to leave, to ask who and what she was. 'The housekeeper of Lord Medwyn,' she said. At once I called her back, told her what her master had done to serve us, and that, thinking that she had on that account a better right to a sitting than almost any other body in the church, I would find accommodation for her in my own family pew until a vacancy in the gallery occurred.

"Well, I resumed my work, the work which she had interrupted; and next morning was thinking no more of Lord Medwyn or the matter, when, on hearing my study open, and turning round to see who the intruder was, what was my astonishment, after the letter he had written me, and the cool determined way in which he had three times cut me in the street, to see Lord Medwyn himself! Before I had recovered my astonishment he stepped up to me, and said, with a noble generosity of temper, sense of justice, and true Christian humility, 'Mr. Guthrie, before I ask how you are, let me say how sorry I am that I ever wrote you that letter. I have heard from my housekeeper the manner in which you received her and spoke of me, and I have hastened over here to acknowledge my error and tender this apology.'

"I mention this to the honour of his memory, and that we may learn charity, and how much more of the grace of God there may be in those from whom we differ than in ourselves." *

But while some breaches were healed, and some were never healed, yet there were on the whole few of the outgoing ministers who had to complain of the loss of social standing. The subject is frequently referred to in the Disruption Mss., and only in two cases do they speak of anything like an unfavourable change. "I am sensible," says Dr. Grierson of Errol, "that I have incurred the loss of a considerable share of social respect and influence, especially amongst the wealthier classes of the community. . . . I certainly enjoy increased facilities for doing good to the characters and souls of my people. I am sensible of enjoying, at same time, a larger measure of attachment from those who adhere to my ministry." † So also Mr. Robertson

* Memoir of Dr. Guthrie, i. p. 406.
† Disr. Mss. xi. p. 14.

of Gartly states: "In our country parishes where the proprietors are generally hostile, our people generally poor, and the wealthier classes are Moderates, it is, I think, clear, that our status is considered as lowered, and our influence is lessened with the higher classes, though, I believe, that even with these there is no diminution of real respect." *

How far such experiences were due to personal or local circumstances, it is impossible to say, but usually the results are spoken of in a very different way. Mr. Innes of Deskford, Banffshire, experienced little or no diminution of social respect or influence. "Those friends whom I formerly most respected and esteemed, still continue their friendship, even in cases where they are not members of the Free Church, and, I believe, I may add, with increasing cordiality." †

At Ardoch, Perthshire, Mr. Grant writes: "That I was to lose social respect and influence gave me much pain at the Disruption, but I have been agreeably disappointed, for I never enjoyed so much respect and influence as since that event." ‡

At Farr, Sutherland, Mr. M'Kenzie was not sensible of having experienced any loss of social position. "It is true that the richer classes, such as factors and sheep-farmers, and a few calling themselves gentry, have remained in the Establishment, but of such persons the number is small in this locality. With them I had been on friendly terms before the Disruption, and my observation and experience prove to me that the ministers of the Free Church are more respected by the few genteel Moderate hearers than their successors in office." §

Dr. Burns, of Kilsyth, states: "In respect of influence in society, there is really scarcely any diminution. The Superior (Sir A. Edmonstone, Bart.) shows unfeigned regard on all occasions, listens to all recommendations as to the poor and public good, although anxious to guard consistency." ||

Mr. Greig, of St. Ninians, lived only eleven months after the Disruption, but that period he considered the happiest he spent on earth. One who knew him well states that never did he shine more in the pulpit, or preach more to the delight and

* Disr. Mss. xvii. p. 6. † *Ibid.* xv. p. 8. ‡ *Ibid.* xiii. p. 9.
§ *Ibid.* xx. p. 9. || *Ibid.* xxix. pp. 23, 24.

profit to his hearers, and never did he meet with more numerous and gratifying tokens of affection and respect. At the time of his sudden death, he occupied a more influential position than ever before. He felt as if he were breathing a purer and fresher air. His last days were his best days.*

Such was the experience of the outgoing ministers in the rural districts and county towns all over Scotland. In the larger cities the change was even less perceptible, as the statement of Dr. Lorimer of Glasgow shows. It may be taken as expressing the general result in similar circumstances :—

"I am not aware of any real disadvantages which I have suffered [socially] by the change. There has been so far a change in outward position, but certainly there has been no loss of social respect. On the contrary, the outward tokens of such respect have been multiplied and rendered more warm. . . . My general influence in society, I am pretty sure, has been increased." †

It thus became plain that the Disruption had modified the whole relations of society. The world involuntarily pays respect to integrity and self-sacrifice in connection with religious principle; and ministers of the Free Church found that they were followed by so much of respect on the part of their fellow-men as preserved the weight and influence which they formerly had. What helped in this was the readiness which the Free Church showed to take her share in any good work that was required in the community. There was no standing aloof. When famine broke out in the Highlands in 1844, she raised at once a sum of £15,000 and sent relief. When religious revival arose, the Free Church united with other Christian brethren, and threw herself into the work.

It is not for us to go into detail as to the tokens of social respect, but one example may be given to show how such things were sometimes met with in the highest circles and in unexpected quarters.

The Marquis of Bute was one of those to whom the Disruption was a great disappointment. As Royal Commissioner it had been hoped that a nobleman of his influence might have

* Parker Mss. † Disr. Mss. i. pp. 10, 11.

done much to prevent the threatened breach, and the result seems to have wounded him. At all events he lost no time in making the Free Church feel the weight of his hostility. There was a *quoad sacra* church in North Bute which the Marquis had built; the minister, Mr. M'Bride had "gone out," and the sacrament was to be dispensed within a fortnight of the rising of the Assembly. Mr. M'Bride had applied for leave to use the building till after the communion, and 470 communicants including the whole tenantry of the parish, with two or three exceptions, had sent a petition to the same effect. A few hours, however, after the petition had been despatched, a letter from his Lordship was received by Mr. M'Bride, ordering him at once to send the keys of the church to the factor. Next day, the congregation met for Divine worship on the public highway amidst torrents of rain, while the church was locked up. "No graphic pencil is wanted to portray the scene or the feelings of the people,"* who stood without flinching, while the solemn services of the day were gone through.

Other incidents which took place showed the same keenness of feeling,† and yet his respect for the outgoing ministers of the Free Church could not be wholly concealed. One interesting example is given by Mr. Landsborough of Kilmarnock:—

"As the late Mr. Bannatyne, Old Cumnock, was much my senior in age, and also in a different Presbytery, I was not intimately acquainted with him. I assisted him, however, in the year 1862 on the Monday of a communion, and after service he and I had a good deal of conversation. As I was aware that he had been chaplain to the late Marquis of Bute when Royal Commissioner, I knew he would be intimately acquainted with the Church affairs of Disruption times, and purposely endeavoured to lead the conversation to that topic. The information he gave was so important and interesting that as soon as I got home I noted it down. Passing by statements such as that 'it was understood that Sir Robert Peel would have acceded to the demands of the Church had not Lord Aberdeen and Sir James Graham declared that if he did, they would resign,' for the truth of which

* *Witness* Newspaper, 14th June, 1843.

† One of them is recorded, p. 362.

Mr. Bannatyne did not vouch, I give in full what he told me regarding himself, and that of which he had personal knowledge. 'The Marquis of Bute, having been appointed Queen's Commissioner in 1842, did me the honour of electing me to be his chaplain. When the General Assembly of 1843 was approaching, having made up my mind to leave with the Evangelical party, I felt that after all the kindness I had received from his Lordship I ought not to allow him to be subjected to the awkwardness of being left without a chaplain; and therefore wrote to him in good time, resigning the appointment, explaining my reason for so doing. The Marquis, in his reply, wrote that the Government had received assurances from the best authorities that not more than twelve ministers would go out, and he asked me not to resign, but to allow another to take my place for one year, and by another the storm would have blown past. I wrote that the Government were being misled, that I was quite decided as to the course I must take, and respectfully renewed my resignation. I went to town two days before the Assembly met, and at once called on the Marquis, who, referring to my letter, said that, in addition to former assurances, my neighbour, Mr. Stewart of Sorn (afterwards of Liberton) had told him that not more than ten ministers would leave. I replied that 400 would, when his Lordship became excited. I had no further intercourse with the Marquis till a son and heir was born to him (1847), when, remembering past kindnesses, I wrote to congratulate him, and received a reply in course, in which he wrote that he had received congratulations innumerable from royalty downward, but not one of them had given him so much gratification as that from his old friend Mr. Bannatyne, and that he hoped that in future I would be a frequent visitor at Dumfries House.'"

It was a cordial and—coming from such a quarter—a remarkable tribute to the secret respect with which the ministers of the Free Church were regarded.

XLV. The Funds.

In closing this Part of the "Annals," we must now refer to the amount of money raised by the Free Church in aid of her operations at home and abroad. Not, assuredly, in the spirit of boasting, but in thankfulness to God, who opened the hearts of the people, we must speak of the liberality with which they brought their free-will offerings into the treasury.

In judging of this, "we must remember," says Dr. Duff, "that at the Disruption we came out of a Church system and polity in which almost everything was done for us, so that we ourselves had almost nothing to do. We had everything to learn."

There were, indeed, voluntary self-supporting churches in Scotland before, but the course on which the Free Church was entering was new and untried. The Old Seceders had risen up to their position by a slow process of growth. The Free Church had started with 583 ministers during the first year. What if men should get weary of the Sustentation Fund after the first flush of novelty was past, and the plan hitherto untried should give way? The struggle with poverty would be hard for the outgoing ministers.

Misgivings of this kind were present to the hearts of many friends of the Free Church, while among her opponents the future was often spoken of in such terms as showed that "ridicule and mockery did not cease with the days of Nehemiah."

In one of the Border counties, where a flourishing Free Church now stands, the people had with difficulty obtained a site in an unfavourable position. While the workmen were beginning their operations, it happened that two Established Church ministers rode past on their way home from a meeting of Presbytery, and were heard amusing themselves by remarking on the appearance of the ground. "It's a poor place,' one of them said. "Yes," said the other, "but I daresay it will grow as many potatoes as the minister will be able to get salt for."

Thus, amidst the fears of friends, and the expectations of adversaries, much uncertainty hung over the future, but there was one man in Scotland who foresaw what was really coming. A personal reminiscence in illustration of this may here be given :—

In the summer of 1843 I happened to meet Dr. Chalmers at Monboddo House, the hospitable mansion of Captain Burnett, and to drive with him and Mrs. Burnett in their carriage over the Garvock hills, on the way to St. Cyrus. After pausing on the summit to admire the long, richly-cultivated valley of Strathmore, with its western rampart of Grampian Mountains, we began to descend towards St. Cyrus, where Dr. Chalmers was to be the guest of Dr. Keith, and to address a meeting in the barn then occupied as a place of worship. On the way, he relapsed into one of those fits of abstraction and silence so common with him, but which in this case lasted longer than usual. Suddenly, after a time, he roused himself, and speaking with singular emphasis, exclaimed, "I will not be satisfied unless the Free Church has an income of £300,000 a-year." I confess it startled me. I had indeed some doubt whether I had heard aright, and ventured some remark as to the amount. "Yes!" he repeated "we must have £300,000 a-year." * I then took the liberty of referring to a recent Parliamentary return, which showed that the whole income of the Established Church was considerably less than this, and suggesting whether it would not be difficult for our people by their free-will offerings to go beyond the whole of those endowments which the State had provided. "I do not care, Sir," he replied with increasing vehemence; "it will be seen what the people can do." And then, as he opened out his views, one could only listen with delight while he spoke of "the power of littles," and how full of encouragement the future of the Free Church was. It was delightful to listen to, but not very easy to believe.

The truth is—as Mr. Dunlop frankly confessed in 1845—these sanguine anticipations of Dr. Chalmers were "looked on as enthusiastic dreams." How they became realised facts, and more than realised, we have already seen in part. We now

* Stated afterwards in public at Inverness, Blue Book, 1845, p. 105.

present in one view the whole money contributions raised by the Free Church for the first thirty-five years. The reader will see at a single glance what has been done, and how the expectations of Dr. Chalmers have been not only fulfilled but exceeded.

TOTAL AMOUNT OF MONEY CONTRIBUTED BY THE FREE CHURCH.

YEAR.	Amount.				Average for Periods of Five Years.			
Mar. 31, 1844,	£366,719	14	3					
„ 1845,	334,483	18	9	Annual Average				
„ 1846,	301,067	5	8	for the first five	£318,086	10	4	
„ 1847,	311,695	18	7	years, . .				
„ 1848,	276,465	14	5					
„ 1849,	275,081	4	4					
„ 1850,	306,622	0	1	Annual Average				
„ 1851,	303,484	6	9	for the second	285,683	6	10	
„ 1852,	267,479	12	5	five years, .				
„ 1853,	275,749	10	9					
„ 1854,	287,574	12	4					
„ 1855,	307,523	11	0	Annual Average				
„ 1856,	289,305	5	9	for the third five	305,029	10	6	
„ 1857,	308,875	0	3	years, . .				
„ 1858,	331,871	3	4					
„ 1859,	343,377	12	10					
„ 1860,	316,557	19	9	Annual Average				
„ 1861,	329,941	2	4	for the fourth	333,803	5	9	
„ 1862,	337,204	4	11	five years, .				
„ 1863,	341,935	9	2					
„ 1864,	343,134	8	9					
„ 1865,	356,660	13	9	Annual Average				
„ 1866,	383,572	4	10	for the fifth five	369,618	10	3	
„ 1867,	369,088	1	6	years, . .				
„ 1868,	395,638	14	5					
„ 1869,	421,783	13	10					
„ 1870,	427,621	18	10	Annual Average				
„ 1871,	413,398	2	4	for the sixth	429,643	4	2	
„ 1872,	432,623	9	9	five years, .				
„ 1873,	452,789	7	3					
„ 1874,	511,884	4	6					
„ 1875,	525,424	12	1	Annual Average				
„ 1876,	534,450	14	9	for the seventh	542,534	9	10	
„ 1877,	565,195	10	3	five years, .				
„ 1878,	575,718	19	9					

The total amount for these thirty-five years is a sum of Twelve million nine hundred and twenty-two thousand pounds, four shillings and threepence.

The annual average over the whole is £369,200.

And this all proceeds from the free-will offerings of the people.

The sanguine estimate of Dr. Chalmers has been actually exceeded on the whole average of these years by nearly £70,000 of annual income.

It is still more striking to observe that for the last seven years (1874-80), instead of the estimated £300,000, the revenue has largely exceeded £500,000—half-a-million sterling.

Such results sufficiently show the strength of principle and depth of religious feeling which were enlisted in the cause. The Free Church appealed to the love and loyalty which men bore to Christ, and it was this which set open the fountain of Christian liberality, and ever since has kept the stream not only flowing but deepening.

Not since Apostolic times, said Dr. R. Buchanan (1867), has there ever been a more noble "outburst of joyful, self-denying, large-hearted, loving liberality to God's cause than was exhibited by this Church of ours in the ever-memorable 1843. It was a blessed time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. . . . Who that had any part in that time can look back on it without feeling as if no other words could adequately describe it but those of the 68th Psalm: "O God, when Thou wentest forth before Thy people, when Thou didst march through the wilderness; the earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel. Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby Thou didst confirm Thine inheritance, when it was weary. Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: Thou, O God, hast prepared of Thy goodness for the poor. The Lord gave the Word; great was the company of those that published it."

Part IV.

The Effect of the Disruption on the Religious Life of Scotland.

XLVI. Dangers in 1843.

In the following sections our object will be to give some account of the work done by the Free Church in advancing the cause of true religion in the land. Already in these Annals we have seen the conflict through which she passed when the battle of spiritual freedom was fought and won. We have traced her after history, amidst those sacrifices and trials which followed the Disruption. And now we come to the more peaceful and less exciting scenes in which she was seeking to carry out the great work for which the Christian Church exists on earth—the upholding of the cause of Christ, and spreading among the people the blessings of salvation.

There were, it must be admitted, very serious difficulties in her way at the outset. For many months the anxiety and toil of the conflict had been excessive. Working at high pressure, with every power of body and of mind stretched to the uttermost, it was obvious that men could not long endure the strain—a time of reaction might be expected to set in, when those who had borne the burden and heat of the day might sink into lassitude and depression. If this fear had been realised, the warmth of spiritual earnestness which had carried them through the struggle would soon have grown cold—the tide of religious zeal which had been running at high flood would have been followed by the inevitable ebb, and the bright promise of spiritual blessing would have passed away.

The fickleness and instability of the human mind, might well have given rise to such misgivings, but there was still greater cause for anxiety, on looking to certain ominous warnings in the past history of the Church. Times of remarkable spiritual life and activity have not unfrequently been followed by

times of degeneracy and decay. Among the Protestant Churches of the Continent there was, at the Reformation, a great outburst of religious earnestness; but, one by one, they lost their first love, and fell into coldness and deadness. In our own country, the marvellous awakening of the Second Reformation soon had its bright promise overcast; and, after the Revolution, our Church, which had stood the fierce fires of the long persecution, no sooner came forth from the furnace than signs of unfaithfulness appeared, and went on increasing till she sank into the depths of Moderatism. Thus it was that past experience might well suggest anxious misgivings for the future, lest what had happened before should happen again.

There was some reason to fear, also, that the spirit of controversy in the Free Church might prove hostile to her spiritual life. For ten years, controversy of a very serious kind had been unavoidable, and men had become inured to it. But the training which makes a good soldier is not that which makes a good agriculturist, and practised skill in the conflicts of religious debate might seem to be but an indifferent preparation for the work of ministering to the wants of human souls, and spreading among the people the blessings of the Gospel of peace. Apart, indeed, from the question of personal fitness, it might well have been doubted how far God's blessing could be expected on her efforts. In Bible history, King David was not allowed to build the Temple, because he had been a man of war. The battles he fought were the battles of the Lord; but the mere fact that he had been a warrior was enough to set him aside, and no stone of the sacred building could be laid by his hand. And so, when it came to the great work of spreading spiritual religion among the people, might not the Free Church have been passed over? It had been a good fight for great Scriptural principles which she had fought, but the very consciousness of this had given a certain sternness to the conflict; and might not a Church which had been thrown into such an attitude have been made to stand aside, and leave to other hands the great practical work of spreading the blessings of salvation among the people?

But the greatest risk of all was the danger of a boastful

spirit showing itself in the Free Church. The way in which she had risen from the ruins of the Disruption had filled both friends and foes with wonder. The deed of self-sacrifice at the outset, the energy of her subsequent proceedings, and the unheard-of liberality of her contributions, were everywhere spoken of. Congratulations came pouring in from so many of the Churches of Britain, America, and the Continent, that she found herself the observed of all observers. Most perilous of all, her ministers and members were looked up to as conspicuous examples of high-toned spirituality and religious earnestness. All this might have proved a fatal snare if the Free Church had given way to the spirit of boastfulness and pride, tarnishing the lustre of the sacrifice she had made, and bringing a fatal blight over all her prospects of spiritual usefulness.

It is interesting to observe how the men who were prominent in Disruption times were alive to the dangers of the position. "It seems to have fallen in the providence of God to the Free Church," said Dr. Candlish, "to attract on various accounts the attention of other bodies, and we cannot but feel that this, among other circumstances, puts this Church in a situation of peculiar responsibility. If we are as a city set on an hill, and if we have been so moved and directed in the adoption of our measures as to call forth the regards and attract the sympathies of other bodies of evangelical Christians,—and, above all, if we have any reason to believe, as others are ready to believe, and some of us are constrained to feel that, as a Church, we have, in some measure, experienced the presence and power of the Spirit of God,—I say, all these considerations are fitted, not to fill us with exalted feelings of complacency, but rather to make us sensible of our deep unworthiness and heavy responsibility."*

Dr. Henry Grey, Moderator of the Assembly of 1844, brought the whole subject before the Presbytery of Edinburgh in an elaborate paper†; and Mr. Andrew Gray, of Perth, in a still more powerful address, gave an emphatic warning in the Assembly of 1848: while incidental statements in the same

* Commission of General Assembly, August, 1844—*Witness* newspaper.
† *Free Church Magazine*, v. 65.

strain will be found scattered, from time to time, through the speeches of the more prominent leaders of the Church.

That the Free Church was able, in all respects, to keep clear of these dangers no one will allege. It was inevitable that among so many ministers and members exposed to the temptations incident to their new position, there would be errors in judgment, and shortcomings and failures in duty. And yet, amidst all such results of human imperfection, the Free Church was enabled steadfastly to hold on her course and do much earnest work for the cause of Christ. It may safely be left for future years to determine how far the Disruption of 1843 is destined to form a marking epoch in the religious history of Scotland. In the meantime, it will be our object in the following pages to show in what spirit the Free Church addressed herself to the work which God had given her to do, and what efforts she was prepared to make in carrying it forward.

XLVII. The Church's Testimony for Christ's Headship.

The first great service which the Free Church rendered to the cause of true religion was the testimony which she bore to the sole headship of Christ as King over His Church. It fell to her to vindicate the crown rights of the Redeemer, while maintaining that no civil court must interfere in regard to things spiritual so as to prevent the Church from following out what she held to be the mind of Christ. It was to Him alone, in things sacred, she owed allegiance. Whatever Kings, or parliaments, or judges might say, One was her master, even Christ, whom she was bound to serve; and her single object must ever be to know His will and do it, despite of all interference. For this great principle she contended and suffered—the spiritual freedom and independence of the Church under Christ, her only Head.

It is strange to look back and see how, at every step of our Church's former history, the same conflict has been going on from age to age.

At the Reformation, John Knox, with characteristic firmness, claimed for the Church entire independence in her spiritual functions. In 1567, he obtained from Parliament the formal sanction of this claim; and, subsequently, one great object of his life was to guard it from the insidious efforts of a hostile party in the Court.

Then came the reigns of King James and his son, Charles I., presenting to the historian one long conflict between the Church and the State—the King asserting his supremacy, and the Church standing out for her spiritual independence.

With the Second Reformation in 1638, and the swearing of the Covenant, it might well have seemed as if Scotland's Church

had achieved her deliverance; but the Restoration of 1660 soon saw her plunged deeper than ever into the sufferings of persecution, amidst which the civil and religious liberties of the country were alike overthrown.

Still the banner was upheld for Christ's Crown and Covenant. On the scaffold and in the dungeon men gave their testimony, and sealed it with their blood.

Then came the Revolution of 1688, bringing the blessings of civil liberty, and the Church fondly believed—though there were misgivings—that her spiritual freedom was also secured on the Scriptural footing on which Knox and Melville and Henderson had placed it.

The century which followed was a time of spiritual declension, laxity, and deadness. A new enemy—Moderatism—rose within the Church, and the Seceders were driven out. But, while religious life was decaying, all through those years there was a noble band of faithful men who, in the face of adverse majorities, upheld the cause of spiritual freedom and evangelical truth in the Church—the Bostons, and Witherspoons, and Erskines, on to the time of Sir Henry Moncreiff, and Andrew Thomson, and Thomas Chalmers.

How the Ten Years' Conflict arose and ended we have seen already in these Annals.* The Church was seeking to give the people their due place and to advance the cause of evangelical religion, when she was assailed in the Civil Courts. We have seen how, step by step, the secular judges encroached on her spiritual functions, casting out ministers whom the Church had ordained, reponing to office those whom she had deposed, and claiming the right to prohibit the preaching of the Gospel in particular districts of the land. It was plain that if these things were submitted to, the Church's claim to spiritual freedom and independence was gone—that great principle for which our fathers shed their blood was overthrown.

In these circumstances, the Free Church made her choice. The sacred functions with which the Church was invested by Christ she could surrender to no earthly king or civil court. The claim to spiritual independence must be vindicated on

* See *ante*, p. 26, *et seq.*

behalf of the Christian people, and for such a cause she was content to suffer the loss of all things.

Now, in following this course, it was her privilege not only to bear witness to a truth of vital importance as touching the honour due to Christ, but the peculiar circumstances in which she was placed enabled her to give it special prominence, bringing it out into public view in such a way that the attention of the whole country, and of many in other lands, was fixed on it.

At once, by general consent, it was felt that she was fighting the old battle of Reformation and Covenanting times. Dr. James Hamilton, of London, has well said that some who garnish the sepulchres of the Covenanters and build the tombs of the Puritans may grudge a stone to this modern cairn. "But when we consider that this Disruption of the Northern Establishment is the resuscitation of the National Church—the revival of the Kirk in the energy of its first Reformation, in the purity of its second Reformation, and in the catholicity of this, its third Reformation, we almost forget the privations with which it has been purchased."*

In a different tone, Dr. Norman M'Leod confesses "the Free Kirk are the descendants of the Covenanters," and the *Quarterly Review* is still more explicit:—The Free Church is "the hard-favoured but manifestly legitimate descendant of Knox, and Melville, and Cameron, and Cargill. . . . The spirit which animated those men is . . . at this moment a living reality, though softened and attempered by the powerful influence of time to the age in which we live, yet still retaining some of the narrowness and some of the sternness,—with, as we believe, all the courage and all the fervour,—of its earlier and more renowned existence." †

In Scotland itself the humbler classes of society—the working men—entered with keen sympathy into these memories of the past, and strange incidents sometimes served to show how readily their thoughts went back to Covenanting times. In January, 1840, for example, a Non-Intrusion Meeting was held in Dumfries, when Drs. Elder, Begg, and Guthrie spoke in

* Farewell to Egypt.

† *Quarterly Review*, vol. lxxvii., p. 222, December, 1845.

the midst of much interruption raised by a body of Chartists. At the close of their addresses one of the leading Chartists of the town rose to reply, "in a very offensive way," says Dr. Elder,* "bordering on profanity. Dr. Guthrie whispered to us, 'We are in a scrape with this fellow, and must watch our opportunity to get out of it.' So after a few minutes the man came out with a sort of profane and obscene allusion to Scripture, when Dr. Guthrie, starting from his seat and raising himself to his full height, lifted his long arm above his head and exclaimed in a voice of thunder, 'Shocking! shocking! I call on all Christian men and women to leave this meeting;' and as he strode out of the church he was followed by the chairman and the greater part of the audience." The Chartists then attempted to put their leader into the chair, but at that point there rose from a seat close to the pulpit a woman belonging to the humbler ranks of life —Mrs. Ewart, the wife of a working mason—"a second edition," says a local paper, "of Jenny Geddes, not flourishing her stool, but collaring" the proposed chairman, calling out, in no gentle terms, "Come doon—come doon;" and suiting the action to the word she summarily effected her purpose. She is described as "a powerful and vigorous matron," and how completely public feeling was in her favour was seen from the applause with which she was greeted on the spot—the allusions at once made to Jenny Geddes, and from a testimonial afterwards presented "in approbation of her spirited and praiseworthy act." Such incidents may serve to show how readily in the minds of the Scottish people the events of the present link themselves on to the memories of the past.

But there were scenes of a different kind in which these memories were more fittingly recalled. The opening of the Free Church at Glenkens—21st September, 1845—was very memorable. Dr. N. Paterson, Glasgow, preached, and was followed by his brother, the Rev. W. Paterson, Kirkurd, and Dr. Landsborough, of Stevenston, all natives of the parish. There was an immense gathering of the people, and during he services of the day reference was made to the time when "the Glenkens gave her testimony for Christ's Crown and

* Memoir of Dr. Guthrie, ii. p. 26.

Covenant by acts which live in the annals of the country. Her M'Adams and M'Millans, her Semples, and Cannons, and Gordons, maintained the hated doctrines for which we have been exposed to trial, by the forfeiture of their goods and by the shedding of their blood." *

Such appeals and reminiscences were all the more effective in a district where not a few of the inhabitants were actually the descendants—the blood relations—of those who suffered in Covenanting times. In the parish of Glencairn, for example—not far from Glenkens—there lived, up to the middle of the Ten Years' Conflict, as occupant of a small farm, a Mr. Thomas Tod, whose father was baptised by Renwick. He died in 1839, in his ninety-third year. It was no wonder that in the districts where such ties with former times were found, men cherished the memories of the martyrs, and the movement of 1843 found such ready sympathy. Mr. Tod's family became zealous members of the Free Church.†

At Larbert, Dr. John Bonar, in preparing his people for the Disruption, "preached at Torwood in commemoration of Cargill's excommunicating the king and his unscrupulous agents, and he found ground for great comfort and encouragement as regards the temper and the convictions of the people. The service referred to was held on a Sabbath evening on the very spot on which, according to tradition, the sentence was pronounced. The congregation assembled numbered several thousands, gathered from the whole surrounding neighbourhood. Dr. Bonar's text was, '*We ought to obey God rather than man*,' and the sermon was in his freest and happiest style, embodying, as his wont was, with clear and express reference to current events and present duties, plain and full announcements of Gospel truth. The impression produced was very deep and very manifest, and to the present writer it appears that, looking back over the events which have intervened between that Sabbath evening and this present time, the battle of the Disruption for the Larbert district was won by the sermon then preached." ‡

* *Witness* newspaper, 1845, 1st October.
† Statement by the Rev. D. Landsborough, of Kilmarnock.
‡ Disr. Mss., lxiv.

Thus all over Scotland the outgoing ministers found zealous support. "We were followed," says Dr. Guthrie, "by a host of our countrymen whose enthusiasm had been kindled at the ashes of the martyrs, and who saw in our movement but another phase of the grand old days that won Scotland her fame and made her a name and a praise in the whole earth." *

But, while such were the feelings of the Scottish people, the principles of the Free Church spread far beyond Scotland. All over Christendom, her testimony for the spiritual independence and freedom of the Church of Christ arrested attention and met with the most cordial response, the leading men of almost all Evangelical Churches coming eagerly forward to express their concurrence and their sense of the vital importance of the truths contended for.

Thus Dr. Angell James, of Birmingham, warmly responds to the Free Church sentiments, speaking as one of the great leaders of English Nonconformity: —"I have been much impressed by the felicity of a phrase adopted as the watchword by the champions who have lately achieved their spiritual freedom in Scotland — I mean the '*Crown Rights of the Redeemer.*' It has floated on their banners, sounded from their lips, run along their lines, and done much to inspire their courage in fighting the battles of their Lord. They contended for Christ as the only Spiritual Head of the Church, and this was their war-cry—'The Crown Rights of the Redeemer.' That name was more potent than those of Wallace or of Bruce to their ancestors when fighting for their country, and that theme had more charms than even the precious, spirit-stirring note of civil and religious liberty. The success of their conflict was owing, in no small measure, to this glorious phrase. It was their zeal for Christ that was appealed to; it was this sacred and mighty sentiment which penetrated into their glens, echoed from their mountain-sides, and, floating over their border plains, roused all their piety as Christians as well as their energies as men, and brought out such a confederated sacramental host to the help of the Lord against the mighty." †

* Life, vol. ii. p. 60.

† *Free Church Magazine.* i. 331.

At the Glasgow Assembly of 1843, the Rev. Mr. Edwards, Professor of Divinity, appeared as deputy from the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists. "They had heard," he said, "that Christ was afflicted in Scotland [suffering in His members], and they sent him to visit them. He had come to see the bush that burned in the northern part of the island, and yet was not consumed. And he had seen it—he saw it now before him." In Wales, they heard that the Free Church was reviled and persecuted as their own fathers in Wales were, and therefore they sympathised with them. One thing he wished to notice. All the landed proprietors in the neighbourhood from which he came were, at the commencement of the Calvinistic Methodist movement, persecutors except one. Now, he would only mention the fact, without attempting to explain it, that the name of all those persecutors had perished from the face of the earth, and their whole property had passed into the hands of those descended from the one who was favourable to them. The answer which Christ gave to his enemies was sufficient for us also: *My Kingdom is not of this world.* This the Free Church had said—not by words, but by deeds. "They had taken the field in the great controversy between the Lamb of God and the Man of sin; but truth is great and will prevail."*

Page after page of such testimonies might be given, if needful, to almost any extent. We invite special attention, however, to the statement of one well able to look below the surface and estimate, as few in Christendom could do, the bearing of the Free Church testimony and its importance in the cause of true religion. Writing in the *Princeton Review,* Dr. Hodge says:—"The truths which the Free Church is now holding up to the world, and for which she is bearing testimony by suffering, are *truths essential to the vigour of spiritual life in the Church and its members.* They are truths which we all admit, but which we have let slip. We have not felt as we ought, that Jesus Christ is our Lord. . . . We must live by faith, not only in His atonement and intercession, but also in His authority and protection. He is our Master, and we must have no other. Feeling, personally, our shortcomings in this matter, we

* Blue Book, Glas. Ass. pp. 95, 96.

have thought it might be useful to call the attention of our readers to the truths which this Scottish movement has brought so prominently to view. . . . With such principles at work, and with such men engaged in her service, we have no doubt of the success of the Free Church. Her cause is the cause of Christ, and must succeed."*

When Dr. Cunningham visited America, he met with "one of the most eminent men in the States—a man of European reputation"—who said that he could tell, in a single sentence, what he thought of the Free Church movement:—"My opinion is this. It is the greatest event that has taken place in the Church of Christ since the Reformation in Germany, and the reason is just this—it has brought out more fully and more impressively, and in a way more fitted to attract notice and command the respect of men than any other event, the great fundamental principles of the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the truth of the revealed Word of God."†

The impressions thus made on the Christians of other lands were surely enough to show that the Ten Years' Conflict and the sacrifice of 1843 had not been in vain. The spectacle was that of a Church signalising her loyalty to Christ and appealing to Christendom on behalf of the great principle of spiritual independence and the freedom of the Christian people. Whatever her after history might be, this much was secured at the outset—she had borne witness for Christ as the only Authority and Head of the Church in things spiritual, and it was a service to the cause of religious truth which had made itself widely felt both at home and abroad.

* Blue Book, 1844, pp. 70, 71. † *Ibid.*, 1844, p. 69.

XLVIII. The Call to Work.

It was a great thing for the Church to have lifted up such a testimony; but it was, at the same time, all-important that no wrong use should be made of what had been done. If the Free Church, for example, had attempted to live on the past, and fight over again for ever the old battles of the Disruption, the greatest injury would have been done both to herself and to the grand truths for which she had contended. Better than these vain contentions—better far than all other arguments—would be the spectacle of ministers and elders throwing themselves with energy into their own proper work, and manifesting the presence of Christ Himself in the Free Church as her living Head—the source of that spiritual power which she was enabled to put forth; most earnestly was she urged to make this the great object of her efforts and her prayers.

"Who cares about the Free Church," Dr. Chalmers exclaimed, in one of those emphatic utterances in which he delighted, "compared with the Christian good of the people of Scotland! Who cares about any Church, but as an instrument of Christian good; for, be assured, the moral and religious well-being of the population is of infinitely higher importance than the advancement of any sect."* Not that he did not care for the Free Church, for indeed it was on behalf of her principles he had given up his position and his income; but his thoughts for the moment were preoccupied with the evangelisation of the masses, and he would fain save his Church from sectarian narrowness.†

* Memoirs, iv. p. 394.

† Within three weeks of his death, his testimony on behalf of the Free

It would, indeed, have been a miserable result if the doctrine of Christ's headship, which the Church had defended at such cost, had been taken apart from its practical influences and set up as the mere shibboleth of a sect—a form of words from which the life and the power had departed. During the Ten Years' Conflict, men were forced to feel the value of the truths for which they were contending. With the sacrifices of the Disruption in view, they were thrown back on the great realities of faith and hope, seeking that Christ their Master might be with them in the day of trial. But in after times, when the struggle was over, the danger was that the truth might be retained as the mere badge of a Church denomination, while its vital influence might have gone. It was to guard against such defections that the warnings of Dr. Chalmers and others were directed. We had better work to do than to be for ever assailing the Establishment which we had left, and exposing the Erastian encroachments of the State. The proper attitude of the Free Church, while ready to defend on all proper occasions her own position, would be to cultivate close communion with Christ her living Head; and as God had done great things for us to make it our desire and prayer that we might be enabled to do some service in advancing His cause on earth.

These were the sentiments which leading ministers and laymen were on all occasions eager to express.

"I have an earnest desire," said Mr. Sym, of Greyfriars, Edinburgh, in the General Assembly, "that the Church which has been so eminent in fighting the battles of the faith should be no less distinguished in the way of doing good. You see a Divinity in the bush that burned and was not consumed; but is the Church in reality less Divine, or is her vocation less lofty, when scattering the Gospel blessings of holiness, peace, and everlasting life among the destitute around them; making the wilderness to be glad, and the solitary place to rejoice and blossom as the rose." *

In responding to this statement, Dr. Candlish maintained

Church was given in the strongest terms before the Committee of the House of Commons on Sites.

* Blue Book, 1852, p. 228.

that we were to prove our identity with the Church of Scotland from the beginning, not merely by historical evidence, but by the palpable evidence of present exertion. "I would despair for my Church, if we were to lie upon our oars, resting on the mere evidence which historical documents, or transactions founded on historical documents, may afford. If we have nothing more to show in proof of our being in very deed and truth the Church which from the beginning conferred essential blessings on Scotland, I should be ashamed of our Church—I should despair of our having God's blessing on any steps we took . . . if we were to rely on such evidence, solely to prove our identity with the Church of Scotland from the beginning. No, sir, it is not by raking up musty documents; it is not by going back to old testimonies . . . that we are to establish really our claim to be the living representatives of our forefathers; but by showing that we have the life in us—that we are alive to the exigencies of the times in which our lot is cast, and that we are prepared to take the full responsibility of the Church of Scotland in reference to dealing with the spiritual wants of our countrymen everywhere." *

And not less emphatic were the testimonies of our laymen, one of the ablest and most devoted of whom—Robert Paul, Esq., banker—declared:—

"Much as I love the Free Church—much as I am interested in all her doings—strongly attached as I feel to her principles, and greatly as I will ever rejoice in the testimony to vital and Scriptural truths which she has been honoured and enabled to bear, I look on all this as comparatively nothing, unless our Church shall be made a great instrument for maintaining and extending the cause of sound religion and vital godliness in the land." †

With these views the Free Church was urged from the first to go forth to the work set before her by God, not merely contending for the truth, not merely relying on testimonies, but ready to labour in the vineyard and bear the burden and heat of the day. It would be impossible for her to flourish out-

* Blue Book, p. 231. † *Ibid.*, 1850, p. 274.

wardly, if her inner spiritual life should decay. Her one grand object must be to preach the Gospel of the grace of God; faithfully to bear witness for the truth as it is in Jesus, and to save immortal souls. If such efforts were crowned with success she might well leave her cause in the hands of God.

XLIX. The General Assembly of 1844.

During the spring of 1844 the meeting of the General Assembly was looked forward to with eager anticipation. Among the people there had been unwonted manifestations of religious earnestness, while among the ministers there had arisen a corresponding sense of responsibility, and a fear lest any backwardness or unfaithfulness on their part should mar the prospects of success. As the months went on this feeling deepened, and when the various Synods met at the usual time, there was a general movement to send forward overtures asking the Assembly to take up specially the work of personal religion, and to make the consideration of it the great outstanding feature of their proceedings.

Most cordially were these overtures responded to. Hardly had the Assembly met when Dr. Candlish, at one of its earliest diets, referred to the urgent need there was of something being done. "All of them," he observed, "had found the people waiting on their ministrations with a seriousness, attention, and devotion, such as they never before observed, the young more open to instruction, the aged more anxious for consolation, the careless more ready to be awakened, the worldly more ready to be rebuked, the people of God expecting large advances in the Divine life. They had been meeting with congregations, all of whom laboured under the impression that something ought to come out of this great work of God; and, oh! it is a solemn question for each of us to ask, 'How much of all this has been counteracted by my unfaithfulness, by my want of an adequate sense of the importance of this most important event.'" In view of such considerations it was agreed that Tuesday, the 21st of May, should be set apart as a day of humiliation and prayer

—the sermon to be preached, and the opening religious services conducted, by the Rev. Charles Brown of Edinburgh, after which the members of Assembly should engage in religious conference. "I shall deeply regret," Dr. Candlish added, "if we enter into any consultation as to what ought to be done before we have thoroughly and truly humbled ourselves in the sight of God, and spread out before Him our sins and failings."

Among the cherished memories of those early years which men love to recall, none, it is believed, have left a deeper impression than the proceedings of that 21st day of May. The object of the meeting, as Dr. Brown stated, was "not so much to speak to one another as to speak to the Lord our God, and pour out our hearts before Him in sorrowful confession of our many, many shortcomings and sins, in order that, betaking ourselves to the fountain of Immanuel's blood, and taking hold of the strength of the good and holy Spirit of Christ, we may humbly and heartily offer ourselves to the Lord, that if He have any delight in us, and if we have found grace in His sight, it may please Him in infinite mercy to *make some use of us* as His instruments in the great work on which His heart is set, and for which the Son of God died."

Very memorable was the sermon which these words served to introduce. Taking as his text Habakkuk ii. 1, the preacher began by "assuming that the ministers and elders in that Assembly were Christians, although the Lord is witness that I assume it not as thinking it a matter of course—in reference to myself at least. It were a very salutary thing this day, be our state and character before God what it may, if we were bearing solemnly in mind that a man may preach the Gospel to others and be himself a castaway. Oh, it were well if we this day heard the great and gracious One addressing to each of us the inquiry, 'Lovest thou Me?' Blessed if we are able in humble hope to answer, 'Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee!'"

Starting from this point, he proceeded to lay open the low state of our souls as Christians, the low state of religion in our own hearts. We might have been awakened recently, and made some happy progress, and this very fact that we were

not quite so far off as before might just be the secret of our now seeing more distinctly our sad distance from the mark of what Scripture requires.

This it was which weakened their whole ministry. "How is a minister to teach to others the ways of God unless he is walking close and straight in them himself? How shall he lay open the sins of others, not harshly but tenderly, unless he is seeing and mourning in secret over his own. The Word of God is the weapon we must wield, but the only way to get to the very heart of the Word is nothing else than our living on it ourselves in secret. What guilt lies on us in this matter. We who ought to have been ensamples to the flock, who have had so many and peculiar advantages for walking with God, alas, our distance from Him has all but paralysed our ministry We have not dwelt in the secret place of the Most High. His Word has not dwelt richly in us. What mischief have we thus done to souls—what good have we failed to do—what endless opportunities have we lost! 'Have mercy on us, O God!'"

Such statements, however, were not left in their vague generality. After striking this key-note, Dr. Brown followed out eight separate lines of thought, laying open various shortcomings and sins, and searching with keen analysis the secrecies of the heart, as well as the course of life and work in the ministry of the Gospel. If it was unsparingly done, there was yet the faithful tenderness and pathos of one who was feeling all the time his own full share of what he was addressing to others; and it was amidst deep, solemn melting of heart on his own part, and that of his audience, that he took up, in closing, the words of Isaiah, "Woe is me, for I am undone; I am a man of unclean lips;" and then referred to the time when the live coal from off the altar touched the lips of the prophet, and the assurance was given, "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged;" and this followed by the statement, "I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I: send me."

Thus the sermon closed in the midst of an audience of ministers and elders who were universally and deeply moved.

Many a head was bowed, and here and there amidst the Assembly men were silently seeking relief in tears.

After praise and prayer, Dr. Chalmers rose to begin the conference. There was something inexpressibly touching in hearing the greatest preacher of his day expressing his earnest desire that these searching truths might sink deep into our hearts, so that with a sense of our own nothingness, our own helplessness, thus laid before us, we may learn henceforth to keep closer than heretofore to the great fountainhead of our strength. "Many are the temptations to which our profession is exposed, and of which our lay brethren and friends have no adequate conception. Our very familiarity with the topics we handle is itself a snare. The lesson of death is not given to the hackneyed grave-digger, conversant with the skulls and skeletons of the churchyard. Neither does it follow that because the great topics of salvation are present to our minds, they should tell practically on the heart. But if they do not soften us, is there no danger lest they harden us? Oh, that we were sufficiently impressed with the solemnity of our position, and were unceasing in prayer to heaven for that unction from the Holy One, without which we cannot save our own souls, neither can we save the souls of others."

Dr. Chalmers sat down. It was in vain that the Moderator invited further discussion. Men's hearts were full; the Assembly remained for a time hushed in silence. It seemed as if members were afraid to disturb the solemnity of the scene; as if it would be best for each to retire and enter into his closet, and shut the door behind him. At a quarter past two o'clock the blessing was pronounced, and men went to their homes.

That same evening a second conference was held, and again on one of the subsequent days the subject was resumed—the most honoured ministers and elders taking part, and deepening the impression. Many a powerful word was spoken. An aged minister, for example—Dr. Laird, of Portmoak—described himself as standing between the living and the dead. After a ministry of nearly fifty years, he could look back with regret on much loss of time and misapplication of talent. There were

many in that Assembly in the full vigour of health and strength (three of his sons were ministers, and along with their father in 1843 cast in their lot with the Free Church), and before descending into the vale of years he would urge them on to the right discharge of their duty, assuring them that if they wrought with all their heart the blessing of God would descend on their labours.

Dr. Cunningham had just returned from a visit to the American Churches, and told how he found the ministers there animated generally by a distinct desire and confident expectation of their labours being blessed to the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints. In the course of his ministry, he regarded it as one of the many sins of which, in common with his brethren, he had been guilty, that he had often engaged in ministerial services without any distinct and positive and ardent desire of such definite results. In America it may have been carried too far, but we may have the use without the abuse.

As the Conference went on, the statements of Dr. Gordon, of Edinburgh; Dr. Brown, of Glasgow; Prof. Duncan, and others, with some from the more eminent elders, gave deeper and deeper impressiveness to the discussion. But the general result cannot be better expressed than in the words of Dr. Candlish. "One feels—I speak with all frankness—after what we have heard, as if till this day we had scarce known or realised our position as ministers of the everlasting Gospel, and the weight of our responsibility as appointed to wield an instrument of tremendous efficacy, whether for weal or woe. It is not that I wish to make any profession of my own feelings, but I think I am only giving utterance to the feelings of fathers and brethren in this Assembly when I venture to say that this night we are called on in the providence of God, and by the outpouring, as I trust and believe, of His Holy Spirit, to a new dedication of ourselves, soul and body and spirit, to God, declaring our purpose by His grace and strength, to be His servants, to spend and be spent in His cause. Oh, let it not be a rash resolution flowing from the impulse of temporary excitement. Once and again have these words burst from the lips of God's servants

this day—'The place whereon we stand is holy ground;' and if it so be, and if in any measure standing on that holy ground we have been enabled to put our shoes from off our feet, and to behold the Angel of the Covenant in the bush burning but not consumed, may we not, sir, led by the Spirit and constrained by the mercies of God, present ourselves anew to Him, and say, 'Lord, we are Thine; Thine, for Thou hast made us; Thine, for Thou hast redeemed us; Thine—shall we say?—Thine because Thou hast revived us. And now, Lord, take us and make us instruments in Thy hand; Lord, enable us to enter into Thy mind.'"*

These scenes, it must not be forgotten, were in perfect keeping with what had been going on for years before. The leaders of the Free Church had been known to the public chiefly as eager combatants on the field of controversy, or able business men in building up the fabric of the Church after the Disruption. All the time, however, as the Diary of Dr. Chalmers, for example, fully shows, these engrossing conflicts and toils had been uncongenial work, from which they were glad to escape and find relief in seasons of devout and earnest prayer.

We see this in the case of the Rev. Andrew Gray of Perth, one of the Church's most formidable champions on the field of argument. What nerved him for the struggle was the conviction that, "deep at the foundation of the Ten Years' Conflict lay the question whether godliness in its living power and genuine evangelical development was to prevail in the Church." And hence the spirit in which his work was done. He was extremely solicitous about his people's prayers in connection with the Church's struggles and his own part in them. While in Edinburgh, attending to his duties as member of Assembly, his practice was, during the years 1840-44, to write daily to the West Church prayer-meeting, so as to keep his people informed of the Assembly's proceedings, "thus making their petitions on its behalf more pointed and precise than they would otherwise have been." The direct breathings of his soul come out in these letters in connection with each step that was

* Blue Book, 1844, p. 92.

taken in the progress of the conflict. He frequently also acknowledges, in warm terms, the assurances which he receives of these prayer-meetings being numerously attended and pervaded by a spirit of deep earnestness and seriousness."*

Another similar testimony, by Dr. Elder of Rothesay—at the time, of St. Paul's, Edinburgh—gives us an interesting glimpse into the private intercourse of those who stood in the high places of the field :—"I cherish a warm and grateful recollection of a monthly conference held in each other's houses by some twelve or fourteen brethren of the Edinburgh Presbytery at that time, and on to the Disruption, at which, along with earnest waiting on the Lord for light and guidance, all the various aspects of the Church question were discussed in a spirit of brotherly love and confidence. . . . We could not but regard it as a token for good, that the prayerful spirit seemed to increase as the time approached. I remember well how manifest this was in the case of our honoured leader, Dr. Chalmers, and of other prominent men, clerical and lay, who were chiefly called to bear reproach for the truth's sake."†

With such feelings, men had come up to the Assembly of 1844 still further solemnised and quickened by the experience of the first year after the Disruption. Never, probably, did preacher address an audience with hearts more open, and never did preacher enter the pulpit better fitted than Dr. Charles Brown to rise to the full height of such an occasion. The general impression has been well described by Dr. Hetherington: "Seldom has a more solemn scene been beheld. The vast hall in which the Assembly met was crowded with ministers, elders, and a large number of earnest and devoted worshippers. And as the preacher prosecuted his great work, his faithful and searching confessions and admonitions, urged with all the impressive power of a heart thoroughly in earnest in his Master's cause, and directed, as we fully believe, to the hearts of the assembled audience by the Spirit of God, the whole vast multitude were bowed and shaken like a forest of trees beneath a mighty wind

* Memoir of Rev. A. Gray, p. lxiii.

† Disr. Mss. lxxi. pp. 2, 9.

—were melted and fused together like masses of golden ore in a seven-times heated furnace. Never will the remembrance of that day pass away from the hearts and minds of those who felt and enjoyed its humbling, searching, and yet refining and elevating power. And if, as may be hoped, and as has been earnestly implored, the ministers, elders, and private Christians who were present retain the impressions then made, and go forward to the discharge of their respective duties, in the strength of the grace then felt and sought, and with the resolutions then humbly formed, a time of much refreshing from the presence of the Lord may be hoped, and an era in the annals of religious revival, and the progress of vital and personal godliness, will be dated from that memorable day.

"Nor did the solemnising and hallowing influence of that day pass away and lose its power, among the many duties which the Assembly had to discharge. In every stage of its procedure that influence was felt, returning and hallowing every deliberation. Topics from the discussion of which some had almost shrunk, lest something like strife or disagreement might arise, were brought forward, investigated and determined with perfect harmony. And so strong was the feeling still entertained by all, that the Assembly prolonged its sitting for one day in order to receive the report of a Committee which had been appointed to take the subject into consideration, that something like a repetition of the same sacred and soul-subduing power might be again experienced. They were not disappointed. And, especially, when some of the elders spoke in the fulness of their hearts, both ministers and people felt constrained to thank God and take courage, believing that God not only would return and re-visit the vine which His right hand had planted, but that His presence and blessing were already realised."

In the view of strangers from a distance, these scenes appear to have been not less impressive.

Thus a minister from Ireland states:—"There was no attitude in which his soul felt more profound sympathy than on that memorable Tuesday, when, as a body, they bowed down before God, and when, instead of railing against their enemies,

they confessed, in deep prostration, the plagues of their own hearts and the sins of their own lives, and in one universal cry that prayer arose—'God be merciful to us sinners.' We never witnessed a scene more solemnly sublime."*

In similar terms Mr. Frederick Monod, of Paris, refers to one of the subsequent meetings:—"I will have much to say when I return to my own people, of what I have seen, heard, and experienced among you. Oh, how I wish that all those who do not understand, or who do not approve of the position you have been compelled to assume, had been present, as it was my privilege to be, on Friday night last. Ah, they would have seen —would have *felt*, that the Spirit of God, the Spirit of our great God, in His Son Jesus Christ, is with this Church—that this is not the work of man—that the whole will turn out to be the work of God indeed; and nothing can overthrow it. . . . Take courage, my dear Christian friends; go on in the strength of the Lord—go on in faithfulness to yourselves and charity towards those who do not go along with you. So long as your Church shall possess that faith so warmly expressed and so warmly responded to—so long as you have that faith, fear not; fear not. Here is a new era in the history of our blessed and glorious Reformation."†

But, gratifying as all this was, those who guided the affairs of the Church knew well that the emotions of such a time might soon pass away. Even in regard to things the most spiritual they were practical men of business, and the question was how best to turn to account these meetings so as to make them a source of spiritual life and power over the land. Presbyteries were instructed to hold similar conferences for mutual edification. The bold resolution was taken that every congregation of the Free Church should be addressed by deputations of the most earnest and fervent of the ministers, who were to press home the offers of the Gospel, and make known the deep desire of the Church for revived spiritual life in all her borders. The next summer, accordingly, was a time of religious effort such as Scotland has seldom seen; and which, as many can tell,

* The Rev. Mr. Johnston—Blue Book, 1845, p. 34.
† Blue Book, 1844, p. 217.

left a deep impression on the hearts and consciences of the people.

A single specimen may be given from the account of one of the respected fathers of the Church, to show how the work was carried on :—"The late Dr. Henderson of Glasgow and myself * were appointed to Ayrshire and Dumfriesshire. Our duty was to preach every week-day evening for a fortnight, and twice or thrice on Sabbath. We commenced on the 21st of August, and concluded on the 5th of September, having visited between twenty and thirty parishes. At Thornhill, we took part in laying the foundation stone of the Free Church, after an eloquent sermon by Dr. Henderson to an audience of between two thousand and three thousand. At Keir, on the following day, Sabbath, I preached to nearly as many in a beautiful glen, where my pulpit was a country cart." In this way all Scotland was pervaded by the earnest evangelistic preaching of chosen deputies. At the meeting of the Commission, in August, the subject was referred to in an elaborate report. The approval of it was moved by Dr. Candlish : "I cannot in too strong terms express my admiration. But admiration is not the word which such a report deserves at our hands. I trust it will tend, by the blessing of God, to promote that spirit of seriousness in our several Presbyteries and congregations—that spirit of serious anxiety regarding the state of vital godliness which it has pleased God to call forth among us."

"In looking back," says Dr. Thomson, "on the Disruption period, the events of which are as fresh in my remembrance as if they had happened but yesterday, I can truly say that it was a deeply interesting and solemn season, when the Gospel was prized, when brotherly love abounded, and when there was a manifest revival of the life and power of true religion. Consciences were awakened, hearts were stirred to their depths, the Holy Spirit was at work, many received a blessing to their souls for the first time, and others received a fresh baptism from above. The memory of these times is very pleasant and profitable, cheering and encouraging, and any hardships or trials endured were not to be compared with the

* Rev. J. Thomson, D.D., Paisley, Disr. Mss. lvii.

rich consolation enjoyed and the abundant blessings bestowed. May a similar revival be granted to us now, especially to the young, and may there be such an effusion of the Spirit on all the Churches, that every true member of them may see eye to eye, and be of one heart and one mind, so that the dispersed of our Israel may soon be gathered into one." *

* Rev. J. Thomson, D.D., Paisley, Disr. Mss. lvii.

L. The Whole Members of the Church Invited.

In the midst of this awakening of religious life, there was one point on which special stress was laid—the duty of all private Christians to work for Christ. Men were eager to strike while the iron was hot, and get the whole membership of the Church enlisted in active service. Like Nelson on the eve of battle, hoisting the signal, "England expects every man this day to do his duty," the Free Church in the day of reviving religious zeal, sent the appeal through the ranks of her adherents, summoning each man to enrol himself among the workers and stand to his post amidst the pressing needs of the time.

In carrying out this proposal there was one advantage on the side of the Church—her communion had been purified to a large extent by the Disruption. A kind of natural selection had been going on by which the most earnest minds had been brought into the Free Church, while many of the more careless, and of those whose presence was a hindrance, were left behind. This was the subject of common remark in different parts of the country, as a few extracts will show.

At Roslin, Mr. Brown states, "The result has been very considerably to purge the communion roll."* At Huntly they say, "We carried with us almost all the pious, and most of those who had any earnestness about Divine things."† Sometimes it is with a feeling of thankfulness that such results are referred to. "The Disruption had the incidental effect (at Collace) of freeing our communion roll from all those in the parish who were communicants in former days, and who had not

* Disr. Mss. xiv. p. 5. † Disr. Mss. x. p. 13.

even the form of religion in their families."* In the congregation of Woodside, Aberdeen, Mr. Forbes states, "Certainly one of the best results has been to lead to a purer communion. Generally speaking, the parties who left us were those whom we were least solicitous to retain in our membership."†

"Before the Disruption there were many," says Mr. Grant at Braco, "in communion with the Church, who were by no means a credit to religion, but upon whom we could not bring the discipline of the Church to bear. Often, indeed, have the office-bearers of my congregation expressed their thankfulness they were no more in communion with them."‡

Such statements from different parts of the country show what the general results were. Additional testimonies of a similar kind could be multiplied if needful, but it may be enough to give one from outside the Free Church, from the ablest, indeed, of those who appeared in defence of the Establishment. "The best ministers," Dr. Norman M'Leod states sorrowfully, "and the best portion of our people, have gone."§ Nor was he alone in this view. "A minister who remained in the Establishment wrote to me," says Mr. Macrae of Braemar and Knockbain, "with sadness that all his good people had deserted him, and acknowledged that it was an immense advantage to the ministers of the Free Church that they had the countenance and sympathy of the piety of the land." ‖

After Mr. Edgar of Memus had been called and fairly begun his work in 1843, one of the neighbouring ministers (Established Church) told him that "the Free Church had got all his good people and all who had contributed anything to the mission schemes of the Church." ¶

All this might well make the Free Church feel more deeply the responsibility of her position.

"We have, in a great measure," says Dr. Burns, "got free from worldly conformity, at least in one of its most ensnaring

* Disr. Mss. xxi. p. 4.
† Disr. Mss. xxvii. p. 11.
‡ Disr. Mss. xiii.
§ Memoir, Edinburgh, 1878, p. 119.
‖ Disr. Mss. lxx. p. 33.
¶ Disr. Mss. lxxviii. p. 12.

forms. May we have grace to improve our freedom and be kept from evils on other hands." *

In Fife, Mr. Melville of Logie is said to have been remarkable for the godliness of his life. "While he was the humblest of the humble, all who came in contact with him felt the piety of the man. He told the writer of these notes (the clerk of the Presbytery) that the two things which God had most blessed to him were the death of his only son and the Disruption. He said that up to the Disruption he had at communions, and on other occasions, to associate with moderate ministers, and that their society was blighting to his soul; but that after separating from the Establishment he felt himself breathing a purer atmosphere." †

In similar terms Mr. Thomson of Prestonkirk records his experience, looking back over an interval of more than thirty years:—"On the whole, I believe I have been happier than I might have been had there been no Disruption. I have had a more select people, more intelligent and more religious to deal with; for, of course, it was for the most part such only that joined the Free Church. One great advantage to myself, personally, has been the being delivered from the constantly deadening influence of intercourse with the moderate ministers. ‡ At Braemar the greatest encouragement arose from the appearance of the congregation. There was "a solemnity that never was observable before, and there was the irresistible impression that our cause was the cause of God. I felt that the position I occupied as a Free Church minister had many advantages. My situation as a minister of the Established Church had brought me often into society where I felt uncomfortable, being unable to receive or to communicate good, and often when it was felt to be a duty to observe the courtesies of life the observance was a bondage. From this the Disruption has set me free, and as freedom the change is certainly regarded. . . . Had our trials been greater they would have been unfelt amid the comforts we enjoyed. The general heartiness of the people, the solemn

* Disr. Mss. xxix. p. 18
† Parker Mss. Pres. Cupar.
‡ Disr. Mss. lxv. p. 2.

prayer-meetings, attended by so many respectable strangers from all parts of the kingdom, and the impression on the young, who, of their own accord, commenced prayer-meetings among themselves in the most retired places in the open air; such circumstances were calculated to encourage and animate our hearts, and to render light any difficulties with which we had to contend."*

In many cases it was in the kirk-session of the parish that outgoing ministers found their chief support. In Edinburgh and Glasgow, and the other larger towns, we have seen how the office-bearers rallied round their outgoing pastors in such numbers, and in many cases of such high social position, as at once gave weight and importance to the cause of the Free Church. In many a country district also it is impossible to over-estimate what the Church owed to the adhering elders. Mr. Fergusson, for example, gives an account of the Kirk-Session at Dunnichen, and his statement would apply in greater or lesser measure to many another parish at the time:—"The outcoming elders of Dunnichen were joined by three elders from the contiguous parish of Rescobie, which had been ministered to by the Rev. William Rogers, a man of God, who had laboured and prayed for his flock for more than thirty years, and who left behind him not a few gracious fruits of his ministry to swell the Free Church congregations of Forfar, Dunnichen, and Aberlemno. The Free Kirk Session of Dunnichen comprised a body of country men, specially remarkable for gifts and graces—men of deep piety and constant prayer, distinguished by uncommon natural intelligence and sagacity—and, on the part of several of them, by extensive reading in the field of Puritan theology, and whose moral influence in the district was consequently prodigious. I remember a specimen of shrewd remark upon the part of one of them, which I record as not unworthy of the consideration of young ministers at the present day. A minister, who had preached at the moderation of a call, having remarked in the presence of some ministers and elders that he had written the sermon before he had selected his text, called forth from this elder the remark:—'Hoot, hoot, sir, surely that's no the way

* Disr. Mss. lxx. pp. 18-24.

ava.' 'And how, John,' remarked one of the other ministers present, 'how would you do if you were to write a sermon?' 'Perhaps,' said the elder, 'I should not give an opinion, but I think that I would first try to find out a text, then I would try to find out the meaning of it, and then *I would stick to it.*' In this Kirk-Session of the Free Church of Dunnichen there were five men, any one of whom could (when, as frequently happened in these days, no ministerial services could be obtained) conduct Divine service in the congregation, reading a sermon of Newton, or Flavel, or some approved Divine, to the edification and satisfaction of an audience which contained several educated and intelligent members, so that the congregation came out as largely in such circumstances as when any of the members of Presbytery was officiating. A minister who visited the congregation after I had been translated elsewhere, remarked to me that he had never seen anywhere a kirk-session like it: composed of men all in the lower walks of life, and who yet, by their piety and prudence and consistent profession, were looked up to and revered by all classes of the community. The sole survivor of that cluster of elders is my friend, Mr. George Milne, who is now the chaplain of the Magdalene Asylum in Edinburgh, and who has adorned the office of the eldership since 1843."

In these circumstances, the religious earnestness formerly to be found with the Establishment having to a large extent been transferred to the Free Church, it was the bounden duty of her ministers and elders to make the most of their opportunity. Not for many a day had there been such advantages. The pulse of spiritual life was beginning to beat more vigorously. The members of the General Assembly met in conference were earnestly seeking a new consecration of themselves to God's service; but, while taking their own place and leading the way, the point most urgently pressed was that private Christians, one and all, ought to be workers.

As to this, the Moderator—Dr. Henry Grey—spoke out in plain terms in his address at the close of the Assembly:—"There are hundreds of labourers, male and female, standing idle around us, who want to be enlisted in this interesting ser-

vice. None should come into the vineyard to be idlers there. A useless Christian is like a cold fire or a dark sun—a contradiction in terms. Why might not our hearers be called out, classified, and engaged in work for their own improvement and the welfare of others?"*

Again, in the following Assembly the appeal was no less emphatic.

"It is the duty of as many as know Christ to commend Him to others, saying every man to his neighbour, 'Know ye the Lord,' and that this should take place in an orderly and approved way. A Church of Christ ought to leaven the world not merely by means of its ministers and office-bearers, but by the testimony and influence and example of its ordinary members. When we look abroad on this country of ours, with its multitudinous population, never can we discharge our duty till every good man, woman, and child, who have a care for their own souls, shall also be engaged in caring for the soul of another. If every living soul would stir up one which is dead, the blessed work would go on by geometrical progression till believers would soon be increased an hundredfold. Oh, that every member of our Church was found relying on Christ, feeding on Christ, and growing in Christ, to the salvation of his own soul and that of his neighbour!"†

There was one class of her adherents from whom the Church received an early and most cordial response—THE YOUNG MEN. In the Assembly of 1847 attention had been called to the societies of young men already formed in connection with various congregations, especially in the city of Glasgow, and the Court formally recommended the setting up of such associations. Peculiar interest attaches to the origin of this movement, and we gladly avail ourselves of the narrative of one of those who took part in it at the outset:—

"Early in the year 1842, and at the time when the Church of Scotland was in the midst of the throes of the Pre-Disruption controversy, a dozen young men met in a room in Glasgow to talk over the questions which were the absorbing topics of the

* Blue Book, 1844, p. 269; Ass. Proc. 1844, p. 269.
† Blue Book. iv. 98-110.

day, when it was resolved that they should form themselves into a society, to be called 'The Young Men's Free Protesting Church of Scotland Society.' The objects of the Society were for the mutual information of its members on the great question then agitating the mind of the country in connection with the Church, and for interesting the young men throughout the city and neighbourhood, and preparing them for taking their part in the work which seemed, by that time, to be becoming inevitable—viz., the organising and carrying on of a Church unconnected with the State, and free from all State control. In the course of a few months the organisation was so complete that a great meeting was held in the City Hall to inaugurate the Society.

"That meeting was addressed by Guthrie, Candlish, Cunningham, Buchanan, and others—the leading men in the Non-intrusion controversy. The result was the formation of a branch of the Society in connection with every congregation in the city. This was the origin of the Young Men's Societies in our congregation. Two of the original twelve young men who founded the parent Society were more or less connected with Laurieston Free Church—one of them is now a minister in the Presbyterian Church in England, and the other is a merchant in the city. Of the twelve young men who founded the parent Society, so far as is known to the writer of these notes, only six survive—two of them became ministers, and the other four are merchants resident in Glasgow. It may be interesting here to note that, after the Disruption, the societies then formed still continued to exist as young men's societies in connection with the various congregations in Glasgow, and long after the time when the original object for which they were founded had ceased to be the primary business, they became the nucleus of what, in the course of time, has become a great power, not only in Glasgow, but throughout the country and the whole Christian world—viz. "The Young Men's Christian Association.'"*

In this way, from the Disruption onward, has the Free Church summoned and welcomed all her people of all positions in life to

* *Union Free Church Monthly Record*, March, 1881.

"come to the help of the Lord." There is no need for the Christian to leave his calling—to become a minister or to go abroad as a missionary to the heathen. In the neighbourhood to which he belongs he will find work enough to be done for Christ. There is ignorance, and drunkenness, and infidelity, and sin in the community, and with these he must contend, striving as he finds opportunity to win souls for Christ. In this way it is that the Church is to be built up and the world subdued, so that at the name of Jesus every knee may bow.

Outside the Free Church—beyond the limits of denominational work—there was a wide field where, as Christians, they would find scope for works of faith and labours of love.

Inside their own Church, on the other hand, there was no want of work waiting to be done. Collectors were needed for raising funds, and that in no secular spirit, but prayerfully and in faith, as a sacred duty to Christ. There were agencies for tract distribution, and district visitation; there were missionary associations, prayer-meetings, and fellowship meetings. Sabbath-schools also opened an inviting field in which private Christians could engage, not only giving instruction to the children of church-going parents, but gathering in those of the careless outside population, through whom the parents might be reached, and so they might influence the most careless. Thus, whatever a man's gifts might be, if only he had the desire, it would be hard if he did not find that the Free Church had some congenial work to put into his hands which would suit his tastes. All who were willing to work would find some recognised position in which they might give their help.

In the enforcing of this duty, no appeals were more urgent than those of Dr. Chalmers:—

"The bringing in of the lay element—drawing out all members of the Church and setting them to work—is of vast moment. I am sure many of the elders could officiate at congregational meetings, and give great satisfaction to the people. While talking on this subject, I am reminded of a circumstance which took place in the parish of Markinch a good many years ago. Old Lord Leven commenced very extensive ironworks in that

part, at which a great many workmen were employed, and these the noble Earl thought proper to have opened with prayer. This was all good; but when the clergyman of the parish who was called upon to officiate was told so, he received the intelligence with some degree of suspicion, remarking that he saw no warrant in Scripture for opening an iron-house with prayer. Accordingly the company who had assembled on the occasion waited and better waited, but no minister appeared, upon which the venerable Earl, baring his head and exposing his grey hairs to the elements in the presence of all the gentry and peasantry, offered up a most impressive prayer. And so well did he discharge the duty that, as the story goes, one of the workmen, when it was over, addressing his neighbour, said, 'My Lord did better than any blackcoat o' them a'.'"*

Such was the attitude taken by the Church when the key-note was struck in the early Assemblies, and as years went on it is important to observe that the point was pressed with ever-growing earnestness. It is remarkable how often men reiterated this admonition. "All that was required," said Dr. Rainy, "was, that men should go forth and tell their fellow-sinners that they are perishing, and that they must come to Christ or they are lost. It really amounted to nothing else than that, man by man, they should go forth and say, not to the people generally, but to individuals, 'You must be converted and come to Christ.'"

"They would never," Dr. Roxburgh declared, "be in a sound condition until all the Christians of Scotland came to regard themselves as Christian missionaries in the spirit of self-denying, self-sacrificing love. Did every church-going family undertake the spiritual oversight of some one among the countless number of our prayerless and neglected families, did they make them the subject of daily prayer at their own family altars, what a blessed change would speedily be wrought." How would the Church realise the character of the leaven that leaveneth the whole lump!

In the words of Professor Miller, "If each man and each woman were doing the Home Mission work what a help there would

* Blue Book, 1844, 252.

be given to the ministry of the Gospel. They remembered the wall of Jerusalem was built by every man building opposite his own door. Let that be the work — the work of laymen, church members, every one who had known something of what it was to be themselves taught under the influence of Divine truth." *

This is one of the main causes of the success of our territorial churches. The best agency in them is found to be the humble hardworking men and women, who, having themselves tasted that the Lord is gracious, devote a portion of their time after working-hours to visiting and dealing with their careless companions and neighbours about the welfare of their souls.†

"Our Free Church has 250,000 communicants. Were all these alive to their privileges and duties, what a mighty force they would constitute. It is our part to urge on our people the imperative necessity of their breaking forth on the right hand and on the left to gather in the souls that lie around them.' ‡

Thus urgently did the Free Church continue to summon her members one and all to work for Christ. It was nothing more than John Knox had done at the Reformation. "In 1560 he found his country emerging from the darkness of popery. Getting round him a band of twelve fellow-labourers in the ministry, he called forth every man who could read the Bible, called him a reader, and set him to read to the people in public. If he could add some words of exhortation, he called him an exhorter, and thus prepared them step by step for the ministry. In seven years he had called into existence a body of 1200 workers, who took possession of the country. The Free Church was in far more favourable circumstances for calling out a willing agency."§ The Scotland of 1843 was in a far other condition as an educated country—thanks to what Knox had done. Still, the need for Christian workers was not less pressing, and hence

* Blue Book, 1860, p. 76.
† *Ibid.*, 1868—Report on Religion and Morals, pp. 4, 5.
‡ *Ibid.*, 1868, p. 18.
§ Dr. Hetherington, in *Free Church Mag.* ii. p. 47.

her urgent appeal for men in all positions of life to give their services.

But, indeed, the Free Church went beyond John Knox. It was a *levée en masse* which was contemplated—the enrolling of one and all her members as workers for the cause of Christ. In this sinful world there were on all sides of us open doors of Christian usefulness, and all were bound to give ear to the cry, rising on every hand, "Come over and help us! come to the help of the Lord!"

LI. The Highlands.

One of the first demands most urgently pressing on the Free Church was the appeal which came from the Highlands for the supply of religious ordinances. The Celtic population, differing in language and customs from the rest of Scotland, and marked by many noble characteristics, had adhered to the Free Church in such numbers that they had a special claim on her regard. Of the 474 ministers who came out at the Disruption, there were 101 who were in the habit of using the Gaelic language in public worship. All over the mainland, beyond the Caledonian Canal, the population had joined the Church almost *en masse*, and though in some parts of Argyle and the Isles most of the ministers remained in the Establishment, and Moderatism had held their congregations in ignorance, yet after a time the light began to be diffused, and to a great extent the people rallied round the Free Church. "It is the testimony," said Dr. Candlish in 1844, "not only of our friends, but of many who are not connected with us, that the Highland population are all but entirely on our side, and that at present the only limit to the number of our congregations arises from the scanty supply of labourers."*

That this was no mere clerical movement was shown in various ways; the congregations, indeed, in many cases were in advance of the ministers. "The principles of the Church," Dr Mackay states, "were rivetted on the souls of the people, and taught from generation to generation. The Church is the constant subject of conversation and prayer." In Sutherland, he tells of a parish minister—a much-esteemed friend of his own—who, during the conflict, had been rather

* Blue Book, 1844, p. 195.

slow in announcing the course he intended to take, when, one Sabbath forenoon, on the eve of the Disruption, he was brought to the point. On approaching his place of worship, he was met by his whole congregation—"not assembled as usual, but standing round the outside of the church in a compact body; and as he drew near, the elders, in a band, came forward with this message: 'Sir, you must now declare to us what your resolution is. Are you to remain in the Establishment, or join the faithful band who are about to quit it? for, if you are to remain, we, as a body, have come to the resolution of never submitting ourselves, from this day, to your ministry.'"*

In the midst of such a state of feeling in the North, it is not difficult to explain the almost universal adherence of the people to the Free Church. A few instances may be given to show the condition to which the Establishment was reduced.

In 1849, Sir George Sinclair† states: "It is but yesterday that a gentleman, himself an adherent of the Establishment, said to me, with a sigh, 'You are far better off here (Caithness) than we are in Sutherland. Our congregations are everywhere smaller. In one large parish there are none; in another, when I went to attend the induction (I think he said) of a new minister, the number of attendants was only two, and throughout whole districts of that extensive county our situation and prospects are equally discouraging.'"‡

At Kiltearn, Ross-shire, the whole people went out, except "two or three individuals." "Only six persons were present in the old Church at the moderation of the call to the new incumbent, and the six included the Presbytery and the presentee."

In the parish of Latheron, Caithness, with its six churches and 8000 of a population, there remained in the Establishment "not a single minister, elder, catechist, or teacher, and not even a single communicant, except one South-country grieve (steward). The teachers, in particular, who numbered twenty-one—including parochial, Assembly, Society, and adventure, male and female—all left in a body, several of them having the prospect of

* Blue Book, October, 1843, p. 68.
† As yet a supporter of the Establishment.
‡ *Witness Newspaper*, 21st November, 1849.

great hardships before them. . . . One of our most hostile proprietors remarked, with deep sadness, that we had made a clean sweep of the parish."*

The case of the South-country grieve, however, was not overlooked. "A missionary, on the Royal Bounty, had been sent from Edinburgh by the Established Church to labour among a Gaelic-speaking population, who, to a man, had joined the Free Church. Strange to say, he had no Gaelic, and even if he could have spoken the language, he had no hearers to speak to. Sir George Sinclair, the proprietor, in a letter to the local papers, suggested that he knew of no better plan than for the stranger missionary to sojourn with the solitary shepherd, whose language he understood, and that the shepherd should adopt him as Micah did the Levite, saying, Dwell with me and be unto me a priest, and I will give thee thy wages."†

At the Inverness Assembly, Dr. Buchanan remarked: "I remember Dr. Guthrie amusing us very much in Glasgow, by telling us of the state in which he found a footpath through a (Highland) churchyard. There was no mark of the path, but every blade of grass on what had been the footpath, was standing up as straight as a halberdier's pike. But he now tells me they are making an improvement on the pathways in the churchyards, by sowing them with salt, killing the grass so as to keep up the appearance of a road, even if there is none to travel it."‡

Gratifying as this general adherence was on the part of such a population, yet the demands which arose caused no little embarrassment. In October, 1843, it was reported at the Glasgow Assembly that in the Gaelic-speaking districts there were no fewer than 150 vacant congregations and preaching stations, all calling out for ministers, while not more than 31 preachers were available for supply. It was obviously impossible that the Church could leave such a body of supporters as sheep without a shepherd, and temporary arrangements were made at once. Twelve of the most eminent Highland ministers were set free from their congregations for six months to go

* Latheron, Parker Mss. p. 5.
† *Ibid.*, pp. 10-12.
‡ Blue Book, Inverness, 1845, p. 64.

forth with Dr. M'Donald, "the Apostle of the North," at their head, to itinerate and preach wherever the want was greatest. Added to these, there were about eighty Gaelic-speaking ministers who agreed to give similar service for a month; and for several years this arrangement was continued.

Thus, the most strenuous efforts were made to meet the immediate want, but a far more important object was to provide permanent supply, and with this view steps were taken without delay. Every minister in the Highlands was required to send in the names of promising young men, to be educated for the ministry. About eighty names were reported, but a large proportion of these being comparatively young, means had to be provided for having them educated and fitted for entering college and passing through the Divinity Hall. Under the fostering care of the Highland Committee, this work was carried out to some extent. After a time, however, another agency entered the field, destined to aid the Free Church in a way for which she might well be thankful. The ladies of Edinburgh and Glasgow formed associations, one object of which was the employment of young students in the work of education among the remote Highlands and Islands. The assistance rendered by these associations, however, was so important that we shall refer to it more at length in a subsequent section.

Such efforts, it was obvious, would require years before they could take effect. In the meantime, it was all-important that the deputations above referred to should be enabled to do their work in the most effective way. Many of the localities were remote and difficult of access, lying out of the usual line of communication. To save time and trouble, and to make the service of the deputies more effective, it was resolved to build a vessel specially adapted for the purpose, to be placed at the disposal of the ministers. The whole arrangements were put into the hands of Robert Brown, Esq., of Fairly,* who "devoted his great intelligence as well as much zealous attention to the subject." Built under his skilful supervision the vessel—*The Breadalbane* schooner—proved to be "admirably suited for the purpose," and was universally spoken of in the highest terms

* Blue Book, 1843, Glasgow, p. 115.

for "her comfortable accommodation, her remarkable sailing powers, and steadiness as a sea-boat."

At the end of five years the Highland Committee bore grateful testimony to the great value of the service she had rendered.* Her log for 1846 is given in the *Missionary Record*,† and taking it as an example, it is interesting to observe how busily she was engaged from 11th May to 14th November. Clearing out from Rothesay, she takes on board Mr. Colin Mackenzie, of Arrochar, at Oban, and Mr. Mackenzie, of Beauly, at Castle Moyle, sails for Lewis, and lands them at Stornoway.—Mr. M'Innes, of Tummelbridge, is conveyed to Ulva; Mr. Clark, of Aberfeldy, to Harris; Mr. Stewart, of Blair Athole, to Loch Spelvie; Mr. Maclean, of Tobermory, to Glen Borrodale; Mr. Stark, of Raasay, to Lochalsh. On 3rd August, Mr. Roderick M'Leod, of Snizort, embarks for St. Kilda, where he lands on 5th August. In September she is off Oban, where Dr. Aldcorn and Dr. Campbell come on board requesting the schooner to proceed with them direct to Easdale on a medical visit to the Rev. Peter M'Bride, suddenly taken ill in the midst of his devoted labours. And so the narrative of these busy months runs on as the ship goes threading her way from island to island, and coasting along the shores of the mainland, landing ministers where help was needed and transferring them from place to place, till at last we find her lying wind-bound in Benbecula from 29th October to 10th November, on which date she sails for Oban, her last voyage for the season, conveying home Dr. Aldcorn and Mr. M'Lean, of Glenorchy, on his return after a five months' service in the Long Island.

The glimpse thus obtained of what was being done may give some idea of the efforts made for the supply of ordinances. The number of ministers conveyed during that summer by *The Breadalbane* was forty-six. And everywhere they met with the most cordial welcome. "*The Breadalbane* carries the messengers of Christ from island to island, and her blue flag is welcomed in many a creek where hitherto the Gospel has been

* Blue Book, 1848, p. 242.

† *Missionary Record*, 1846, p. 552.

a strange sound. You can have no idea of the feelings with which these islanders view the good schooner. I will never forget one evening when a party came from a distance, 'just to get a sight of the ship,' and having examined her snug and comfortable cabin, one of them came to me, and with tears in his eyes said, 'I now see the Free Church is determined to send us the preaching of the Cross, and to look after our souls.'"*

While this was going on, there fell on Britain the famine of 1846, which was destined so seriously to affect the political and commercial destinies of the nation. Nowhere in Scotland was the calamity so grievously felt as in these remote Highlands and Islands, where the potato crops had almost entirely failed. The Free Church, to which the starving people chiefly belonged, were the first to come to the rescue, raising at once a sum of more than £15,000. In that crisis the services of *The Breadalbane* were invaluable; first on a voyage of inquiry, to ascertain where the pressure of want was most severe, and afterwards to carry the supplies of meal to the destitute. The twofold ministry went well together—the temporal and the spiritual. We can easily understand what one has stated, that the sensation in whole congregations and districts was very great when *The Breadalbane* appeared in the offing. Many a day the sight of her flag had been a cordial to the hearts of the poor people hungering for the bread that perisheth as well as for that which endureth unto everlasting life.†

A general fund to meet the wants of the sufferers was afterwards raised by public subscription, and in this the members of the Free Church took their full share, notwithstanding their previous effort. It is believed that not a single person died of famine during the whole of that calamitous time.

Our chief concern here, however, is with the spiritual work of the Church, and her efforts while ministering to the religious wants of the people. Nothing was more remarkable at that time than the eagerness with which congregations assembled to listen to the Gospel. It had but to be announced that a Free

* *Missionary Record*, Sept. 1845, p. 202.
† *Ibid.*, 1846, p. 351.

Church minister had arrived in any district, and crowds flocked to hear him, and would sit the livelong day listening to him. They were thirsting for the Gospel.

"In those days there was no complaining of cold, no expressions of dissatisfaction with their uncomfortable position.* To wipe off the hoar frost or snow of a Sabbath forenoon from their seats and then sit down was almost a matter of course. Delicate persons, who under other circumstances would on no consideration run the risk of exposure to the elements, would come and sit out the whole service, forgetful of consequences. The truth is they felt that the cause was the Lord's, and that it was their high privilege to witness for it. But those were great times, to be held in everlasting remembrance. The shadow of Jehovah's mighty hand was over and around us. His power was felt in our midst. Souls thirsted for the Word. Preaching became delightful, and fatigue and exposure were little thought of."

Some examples of these scenes deserve to be given.

Already in these Annals (p. 427) we have narrated the strange incidents connected with the iron church at Strontian, Argyllshire. Dr. Beith of Stirling was one of those who took a deep interest in the case, and has kindly furnished us with the following notes taken at the time. The reader will best appreciate his narrative by referring to the frontispiece of this Part, giving a view of the iron ship on her voyage up the Loch, showing the strange expedients to which the Free Church was compelled to have recourse where sites were refused.

"Loch Sunart runs far up, from the Sound of Mull and the open Atlantic, into the country, and possesses on its shores on both sides a large population. It was resolved to have a Floating Church, to be moored in Loch Sunart, to which the people might have access by boat from all quarters. A central spot was fixed on, and the effort was made. The enemies of our cause were incredulous, but we were in earnest. The good Graham Spiers entered with great spirit into the scheme. A sum of £2000 was speedily realised. The huge hulk, constructed of iron, was built, fitted up with pulpit and benches,

* Disr. Mss. lxvii. pp. 2, 3.

small vestry, &c., and successfully towed from the Clyde round the Mull of Kintyre by one or two tug-steamers, and in the end safely moored in the appointed place. The exploit of her voyage over so dangerous a sea had not been without peril. The structure was so great and clumsy, withal so unmanageable, that more than once she had nearly dragged the tugs upon the rocks. By the kindness of an over-ruling Providence the risks were surmounted, a safe arrival at the intended destination was accomplished, and regular worship was established. As a place of worship the accommodation was very comfortable. The pulpit stood at the bow—under cover of course—having the vestry at one side. The entrance for the congregation was towards the stern; that for the minister near the bow. A passage on one side, running the whole length of the church, afforded access to the benches, which were ranged straight across ship throughout her whole length, and occupied the entire breadth, excepting what was required for the passage. About 750 hearers could be comfortably accommodated. Too large the church was for the neighbouring population, but sometimes it was quite filled, even crowded. A little experience taught the method of judging of the number present by the gauge provided at the bow-post. One number sank the church to a depth which was marked by the index. Another number sank it to a different depth. So it became a very simple question in arithmetic to determine whether the number at any time present at worship was two or four, five, or seven hundred.

"Here I preached thrice on the Sabbath—twice in Gaelic, once in English—to a very interesting congregation of Morvern and Argyllshire Highlanders. When we arrived at the ship by boat, and took our places about twelve o'clock, the day was fine, scarcely a breath of wind, the floating leviathan heading up loch, and looking to the east. Our last look of the land—sloping beautifully up from both shores—before service, was obtained from that point of view. During the service I became conscious of some unaccountable change, from the altered position of the sun's shadow, and from the sound of water striking the outside of our place of worship with the *swashy* noise so familiar to one's ears on shipboard. By-and-by I

TOWING THE IRON CHURCH INTO LOCH SUNART.

fancied I felt some slight motion, as of heaving and rolling. It was very slight, and disturbed nobody. By half-past three o'clock the three services had been brought to a close. Meanwhile the sunshine had disappeared, and a rather deep shadow prevailed in our church notwithstanding the numerous and large 'skylights' overhead. When we emerged from our under-water condition we found that the wind had quite changed, and that it now blew *up* the Loch from the south-west—somewhat sharply too—quite enough to expose the boats and their occupants, as they made their very frequent trips to and from the shore, to considerable showers of spray. All, however, got safe to land, after much time was consumed—no casualty, and no discomfort even, of any kind occurring to cause aught that was unpleasant.

"I was thanked by the office-bearers, and told that their church had never been so deep down in the water before!"

Here is another interior in different circumstances:—"At Resolis, Mr. Sage and his people had to meet in an old dilapidated storehouse on the seashore, in an out-of-the-way corner of the parish. The building had once been used as a granary or meal store by the lairds of Newhall, at a time when the tenants paid rent in kind; but for years it had been unoccupied except by the rats. The place of meeting was the upper floor or storey, approached by an outside stair; and as there were no windows, the only ray of light was admitted through a solitary pane of glass in the roof, not over a foot square, directly under which the minister had to stand to enable him to read. The congregation, numbering several hundreds of people, — one could scarcely guess how many, the dim light barely serving to make darkness visible, — were packed as closely as they could sit or stand together. And as most of them had come long distances to hear the Word, it was not a brief hour and half of it that would satisfy them, but some four or five hours at least; in the course of which there were three services in succession, without any interval." "The writer's impression is that the place of meeting was used only when the weather did not admit of their sitting with comfort in the open air. On the western

side of the parish there was another place of meeting under the shelter of a wood. One of the elders remarked that what the Psalmist had said of the ark in the 132nd Psalm, agreed well with the experiences there of the Divine presence in the wood :—

"'We did find it in the fields,
And city of the wood.'" *

The open-air meetings were often deeply impressive. Mr. Fraser, of Kirkhill, refers to his experience immediately before the Disruption at the crisis of the Ten Years' Conflict :—

"In October, 1842, it was reported that there was a great religious movement throughout Skye, and need of more ministers. Accordingly, I went to assist, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Macdonald, of Urray. We found the people ready to assemble in eager crowds on week days as well as Sabbaths, whether the weather was wet or dry. One day, in Bracadale, the Rev. Mr. Glass and I rode to a remote mission station to preach. The day was so rainy that we looked for a very small audience ; but, to our surprise, we overtook group after group wending their way, wet and draggled. We came to a rather broad and flooded stream, and, for a little, hesitated whether we should attempt to ford it, though mounted on strong horses. After crossing, we waited to see what the pedestrians would do. They ingeniously formed a chain, linking arm in arm, the strongest men at the head of it towards up stream. They then stepped in, the men first, bearing the force of the stream, supported by the rest leaning against them. They thus diverted the force of the current from the women, who formed the lower part of the chain. All got through, slowly but safely, and proceeded a mile further to church, wet and dripping. The little church was filled, and where there was such eagerness to hear the Word it was to be expected it would make some impression. So it was ; for, about the middle of the service, all heads were down, silently weeping and wiping their eyes, but one hard-featured old man who, though he held up his head, had some tears running down his furrowed cheeks.

"One day we sent intimation that there would be preaching

* Disr. Mss. lxxx. pp. 14-16.

at Sconser. The day turned out wet, and there was no place for the people to sit with any degree of comfort, but on the shingle of the sea-shore when the tide was out. For a shelter and pulpit for the ministers, oars were set upon end and a sail thrown over them. The Rev. Mr. Macdonald preached with effect to an eager congregation, and we then wished to dismiss them, but they would not go away. They would insist on getting another sermon. I then preached; and, after a time, the tide was gaining upon us, so that those in front of the tent had to retire by degrees to the sides. Still they would not go away, until I intimated to them that I hoped to preach next day in the parish church at Broadford, some eight miles off, where they might go and hear more. This intimation spread far, and next day many came great distances to hear; but, unfortunately, the parish minister would not give the use of the church on that day, but offered to give it the following day, and word to that effect was sent to those assembling. We were much disappointed as well as they. Among them, a boatful of people came from Strathaird, who offered to take us to see the stalactite cave there on condition that we would afterwards preach in their mission church. We gladly agreed, and set off with them. After a time we landed the female passengers, who ran in various directions, intimating that there would be sermon at three o'clock. At that hour the little church was crowded. After sermon, we proceeded to the boat to return to the manse by six o'clock, as had been arranged; but the whole congregation followed us, and pled so earnestly for another sermon, many weeping as they spoke, that I agreed to remain, and preached, though at the risk of offending the parish minister, and being denied the use of the church next day, thereby disappointing hundreds. The minister was highly displeased, and went from home next morning without seeing me, but left the key of the church. The church is some distance from the manse, and, on arriving at it, we learned that a large congregation had assembled on the previous day, when we had gone to Strathaird, and, though disappointed of a sermon, they returned this day, and crowded the large church. During the sermon it was necessary to stop twice, and sing some verses of a psalm to

calm their excited feelings, so impressible were their minds at that time. What ordinary congregations would hear with composure affected them so that many trembled, others wept aloud, and some fainted. It was altogether a striking scene."

In 1845, Dr. Begg visited Applecross and preached to the people. "We were little prepared," he says, "for the scene we were now to witness. The night was very chilly, and when we asked where the people were to meet we were led along to a place on the very shore, amidst the stones and tangle of the sea-beach, and which could only be approached by clambering over a precipice. Here the tent [pulpit?] was erected, and old and young assembled and sat without a murmur, singing the praises of God in these singularly wild and plaintive notes which melted all our hearts at the Inverness Assembly, and hearing the Gospel preached in the face of a biting wind, and with the waves of the Atlantic dashing at their feet. I question if the world, at this moment, can match such scenes as these. It seems that the people—nearly all of whom left the Establishment—had, at first, taken their station at the roadside. This was reckoned too good for them, and they were driven down to the place to which I have referred." "A more noble people," Dr. Begg states, "I have never seen, and the eagerness with which they listened to the preaching of the Gospel was indeed remarkable. We were particularly struck with one woman, who told us that, from her youth, she had occasionally walked fifty miles to hear the Gospel. 'Death,' she said, emphatically, 'has reigned in this place for many years.' She has still to walk fifteen miles to hear the Gospel; but, since the Free Church began, she walks that distance most cheerfully."

"We announced a sermon at Shieldag the following day, a place at least ten miles from Applecross. The first thing I saw when I looked out in the morning was people starting for this sermon. The way was over a rough mountain without a road. We performed the journey on foot, and it was no easy task to climb so steep a hill, and to leap from point to point, over such rude stepping-stones. . . . A large congregation had been waiting for two hours, but this is thought nothing of in the Highlands.

"Here was another scene like that at Applecross. The tent (pulpit) was placed amid the naked rocks on the sea-shore, the sound of the Psalms literally mingled with the roar of the waves of the Atlantic. The tent was fastened down with strong ropes to prevent its being upset, and there were grey-headed men sitting uncovered in the cold,—and several of them with tears streaming down their cheeks, whilst Mr. Glass preached to them the blessed Gospel in their native tongue.

"Every new spectacle I witnessed deepened my impression of astonishment. These poor Highlanders must face all the storms of winter on the bare sea-beach, denied a single inch of land on which to erect a place of worship. *Such a state of matters in Ireland would shake the empire,* and it is Christian principle alone which has borne it so meekly. We were told by the catechist, a worthy and somewhat picturesque-looking man, called in Gaelic 'White John,' that there had lately been a revival of vital godliness in this district, especially amongst the young, and produced by the simple instrumentality of reading the Word of God; and the whole aspect of the congregation bore evident marks of the power of the Spirit of God."*

Three years after this visit the people of Applecross had obtained a site; and, certainly, their anxiety to listen to the preaching of God's Word had not diminished—assembling, as they continued to do, from distances of from twelve to eighteen miles. "During my stay there," a minister who preached to them reports, "the weather was very wet, so much so, that I often observed, after sermon, females rising from the stones on which they sat, wringing the water out of their clothes before starting. But no weather, however unfavourable, could keep these people back from ordinances. Indeed, I never saw people more eagerly desirous to hear. Nor have I met with any who seem more determined in their attachment to the Free Church, though the difficulties which they had long to contend with were many and trying.

"They are getting on but slowly with the building of their church, owing to the difficulty of carrying materials. I dare-

* *Free Church Mag.* ii. 370-71.

say you are aware of one striking peculiarity in the economy of this district. There are no horses in it. In consequence of this, both men and woman carry the stones on hand-barrows and on their backs. The women are at heart as active and hearty as the men in carrying the materials. If the weather continue open, they may be under shelter by the middle of December."*

"Last winter," one of the catechists in another district reports, "it was with my plaid I kept the snow off my Bible while I was preaching to the people in the open air."†

The earnestness with which the simple-minded hearers "received the Word" was sometimes touchingly expressed. "I inquired in one place at a woman whether a minister of the Free Church had not been present here last year, when I was informed that there had, and that he preached in a tent (pulpit) made up of a few sticks and a blanket. 'Yes,' she said, 'and many is the day that I have gone since, to recollect myself of what he was telling us, by standing in the place where the soles of his feet stood.'"‡

Such extracts might be multiplied, but it is enough to give the experience of Dr. Mackay, at a Highland communion in the spring of 1848, as showing the eagerness of the people.

A congregation of 6000—some said 7000—had assembled, many of them having come from a distance of twenty-five or thirty miles, on one of the coldest April days, and amidst one of the bitterest showers of snow. Beginning at eleven o'clock, he was able to continue the service till seven o'clock in the evening, when he dismissed the congregation, feeling himself "*rather fatigued.*" "To my astonishment I learned," he says, "that after my departure the congregational services were continued till past twelve o'clock at night."§ There was surely something more than Scottish earnestness and endurance in this!

It may well be believed that such hungering and thirsting for the Word of God would not fail to be followed by spiritual blessings.

* *Missionary Record*, March, 1848, p. 357.
† Blue Book, 1848, p. 232.
‡ *Ibid.*, 1848, p. 240.
§ *Ibid.*

In May, 1844, Mr. Macrae tells how he visited and preached in the district of Lochcarron, and the marked effects of the preaching. Old and young were brought under the power of the truth. It was felt almost universally that the way of justification freely by grace is the only way through which a guilty creature can escape the wrath of the righteous Judge. For the last fourteen months the good work has been making progress. A goodly number are feeding on Christ, the Bread of Life, while many others are standing with awakened consciences and humbled hearts anxiously seeking an interest in Christ.*

The following year, the Rev. Mr. M'Bride of Rothesay gave an account of the revival of religion in Knapdale. The awakening had been most remarkable and unexpected. From early winter till May he had gone down weekly, and the impression made at first had continued. Every new visit he paid he heard of new cases of awakening, and that among some who had scoffed at the beginning. Between 200 and 300 had been brought under serious religious impressions; of these a portion had found peace in Christ. There had been no going back —rather it was found that some who were doubtful at first got more decided. There had been outcries and bodily agitation; but these were not the leading features. There was weeping, however, to an extent he had never witnessed. They readily acknowledged that the cause of this was sin. He was happy to say that their religious characters were emerging beautifully. There was a humbleness, a self-abasement, a love of the Saviour, and devotedness to the glory of God, which it was delightful to witness. The people were altogether free from extravagance. The only means he used was the open preaching of the Gospel. He regarded what had occurred as a token of encouragement—a proof that the Lord had not forsaken his people.†

It was at no slight cost, however, that such work was carried on. Dr. Elder, who succeeded Mr. M'Bride in his charge at Rothesay, referring to the circumstances just mentioned, goes on to say that "undoubtedly he (Mr. M'Bride) fell a sacrifice,

* Blue Book, 1844, p. 199.
† *Ibid.*, 1845, pp. 101, 102.

while yet in the prime of life, to his great labours throughout the West Highlands at and after the Disruption. It is, however, a cheering reflection that his labour was not in vain in the Lord. There are good grounds for believing that many souls were quickened and brought to the Saviour under his earnest and widely extended labours." *

The island of Mull may be taken as an example of how the work went on even under circumstances the most adverse. Before the Disruption the ministers all belonged to the Moderate party, and remained in the Establishment. There was a general state of spiritual deadness; and out of a population of 10,000, only a few joined the Free Church. In Torosay, as we saw,—the most sorely tried congregation in the island,—they had to worship in a gravel pit under high water mark, and there they were still meeting in 1848. "Hearts, however, have been warmed by the love of Christ in the cold gravel pit which now acknowledge Him as their only Lord; there are members of this congregation of whom the world is not worthy." † At the same time congregations were formed at three or four other points in the island. "In 1857, Mr. Sinclair, of Lochalsh, dispenses the communion at Torosay. Great changes have taken place. Instead of the gravel pit, there is a neat, substantial, and well-finished, little church, with a vestry and belfry, within a few yards of the pit, built almost entirely by funds left for that purpose by the late Mrs. Campbell, of Possil, the niece and daughter-in-law of the gentleman who formerly declined giving a site. In that church the bulk of the piety and intelligence of the district assemble for worship." ‡

Of the religious awakenings which took place at Islay, Coll, and elsewhere, it is not for us here to speak. Enough has been said to show the spirit in which Free Church ministers threw themselves into this work among our Highland population, and the results which followed their efforts. Already, in 1844, the committee state their conviction that the great Lord of the Vineyard has been in several districts, signally crowning the

* Disr. Mss. lxxi. p. 18.
† Blue Book, 1848, pp. 241, 242.
‡ *Missionary Record*, 1857, p. 210.

labour of our ministers, and blessing the means of grace for gathering sinners to Himself.*

In yet stronger terms, Dr. Mackay, who well knew the Highlands, and their religious history, summed up the results:—"I feel the strongest conviction that never since the first light of the Reformation dawned on the land of our fathers, has there been such a universal religious movement over the whole of the Highlands and islands as there is at this day. There, at this moment, we have presented to view a spiritual realisation of the prophet's vision of the valley—there is a moving and a shaking of the dry bones, and the Spirit of the Lord evidently going forth to work a work which shall be great in our day, and the effects of which eternity itself alone will unfold."

* Blue Book, 1844, p. 199.

LII. "The Men."

To understand the effect of the Disruption in the Highlands, it is necessary to take into account a peculiar class of the people known as "The Men." They belonged, for the most part, to the working classes, and were frequently to be seen wearing a distinctive dress as a badge of their order—a long blue cloak, with a spotted cotton handkerchief bound round the head. Many of them were men of superior natural abilities, though with little education; but, having carefully studied the Bible, along with certain favourite Puritan authors, and having a high reputation for personal religion, they wielded, in some localities, a predominant influence over the popular mind. In the South of Scotland their position has often been misunderstood and misrepresented, but what chiefly concerns us here is the part which they took at and after the Disruption.

Two parties, it appears, had arisen in their ranks, widely different in spirit and aims, and serious mistakes have sometimes been made in attributing to the whole body what was true only of the less numerous and more unsatisfactory of the two sections.

The better class—the more devout and earnest—were spoken of by Dr. Candlish in terms of high commendation. "Unauthorised they might be of men, but the Head of the Church had owned and blessed their labours . . . all the more because they have known their place in the Church,—have intruded into no office, labouring, as God gave them opportunity, in reading and expounding. They have heartily co-operated with the ministers whom they esteemed, not weakening but strengthening their hands."*

* Blue Book, Inverness, 1845, p. 113.

It was in connection with the Lord's Supper that "The Men" came prominently into view—those "sacramental occasions" which, all over the Highlands, were the great events of the year. Usually, in each parish, when the time came round, there were four or five ministers who met to give assistance. They lived together in the manse, enjoying much profitable ministerial intercourse, discussing any questions which might affect the cause of true religion at the time, and comparing notes as to the spiritual state of their various congregations. Among the people the greatest interest was excited, gathering as they did in crowds from wide districts of the country, and remaining for days together in attendance on the ordinances of the Church.

Of all these gatherings the most remarkable was the annual communion at Ferintosh (Urquhart), under the ministry of Dr. M'Donald, where ten thousand hearers were wont to assemble in the glen. When the vast audience were seen hanging on the lips of the greatest preacher in the north, and fairly moved by his stirring appeals, the whole scene was such as no one who witnessed it was ever likely to forget.* As an example, however, of what was more frequently to be met with, we may take one of later date—the communion at Snizort, in Skye, presided over by the well-known Rev. Roderick M'Leod. On the occasion referred to, he had as his assistants the Rev. Dr. Mackintosh Mackay of Harris, Mr. M'Phail of Sleat, Mr. Kippen of Raasay, and Mr. Gualter of Hawick. On the Fast-day—16th July—the people assembled "long before the hour of worship" to unite in prayer for a blessing on "the Word and ordinances." The opening services were conducted by Mr. M'Leod in Gaelic, after which Mr. Gualter preached in English, and Mr. Kippen followed in Gaelic, the whole service lasting four and a-half hours.

The meeting on Friday, however, which is conducted in Gaelic, and in which "The Men" take a prominent part, forms the great distinctive feature of a Highland communion. The object is to assist intending communicants in the duty of self-examination, the speakers endeavouring to point out the marks which distinguish the true Christian from the mere professor or hypocrite. So much is this kind of religious conference relished by the

* Life, by Dr. Kennedy, p. 79.

people that the Friday meeting—"The Men's day"—is usually very largely attended.

On the occasion referred to at Snizort, the church, which holds 1200 people, was quite full. The minister, the Rev. R. M'Leod, presided, and opened the meeting with praise, prayer, and a short exposition. He then asked the brethren for "a question," when an aged and respected elder rose and gave Eph. v. 8,—"*Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of the light.*" He asked the marks of those who are light and walk as children of light, distinguishing them from those who are still in darkness. Mr. M'Leod then stated and opened the question, telling the people that it was most suitable for a day of self-examination and preparation for the Lord's table. He then called in turn upon six or eight elders, men of approved Christian character, to speak on the question. This they did with a wisdom and a power of discrimination between truth and error that gave evidence, not only of an intimate and experimental acquaintance with the truth as it is in Jesus, but also of a clear and sound knowledge of the doctrines of the faith and the writings of such eminent divines as Owen and Boston. The addresses were occasionally intermingled with praise and prayer; and the whole was ably summed up and improved in a few closing remarks from Dr. Mackay.*

Sometimes these Friday gatherings were held in the open air, and the following vivid sketch from the graphic pen of the Rev. Eric Findlater (Lochearnhead) will enable the reader to picture the scenes which were witnessed on such occasions. He is describing the meeting in his father's parish of Duirness, Sutherlandshire, as it used to be before the Disruption, and as it continued to be afterwards, with a change of place to the Free Church:—

"The old parish church of Duirness stands on a very picturesque spot. It is an ancient cross-shaped building, roofed with grey slate, and surrounded by the churchyard or burying-ground, which is thickly studded with graves and grave-stones, and overlooked by an ancient manor house, once the dwelling of the Barons

* *Miss. Record*, 1863, pp. 351, 352.

of Reay. It is a July day, bright and warm and beautiful, and Balnakeel with its wide bay is seen to the best advantage. On the shore everything is green as an emerald—the wild flowers in full blow. If you look seaward you could perceive the white ships of various sizes, some under a full press of sail, standing out for the wide Atlantic, carrying perhaps to our distant colonies those who are now casting a last fond look on the bold coast of their native Scotland—others lying to, fishing among the shoals of cod that frequent the coast. If you turn your eye landward there is a range of hills—some of them upwards of 3000 feet in height—encircling the parish and standing as its giant guardians. In the churchyard, with its back to an old monument, stands the tent (pulpit), and before it are stones, stools, and various kinds of seats for the people. Shortly after ten o'clock they may be observed making their appearance in twos and threes, generally the old and those from other parishes coming first to the place of meeting, and by-and-by these tiny streams, by accessions at every point, soon increase until at the two gates of the churchyard they flow in like a river. And you could observe the solemnity that spread itself over them all. This is not like an ordinary assemblage. The step, even of the elastic young, is slower and more staid, and all neither converse so much nor in so loud a tone as on other occasions. 'The Men'—*i.e.*, those of an established religious character—are evidently, though unconsciously, the teachers; for as one or two of them walk slowly together—first, young inquirers might be seen at their side, silent auditors of the words falling from their lips; and next, the young and the thoughtless, by their proximity to such characters, subduing much of their thoughtlessness. At length the bell in the old belfry announces that the clergymen are at hand, at the hearing of which such as may have previously been conversing or standing in groups become silent and betake themselves to a seat—some sitting upon the grave-stones and others upon the graves, with a part of their plaids under them, and the remainder drawn over their face to screen them from the sun. The bell tolls again, and the ministers enter the tent (pulpit), threading their way cautiously, each hat in hand, through the

lane of human beings before them. The oldest minister rises and gives out a portion of a psalm, in the singing of which all join. He then offers up an impressive and suitable prayer. After a short pause he again gets up, and briefly alluding to the well-known services of that day being one set apart for Christian conference, he asks if any of the people of God then present have a portion of Scripture upon which they would like to get the opinion of their fellow-Christians. Sometimes there is a considerable pause, while the silence is such that you could hear the twittering of the sparrow that sits upon the church roof—all eyes however are anxiously looking round. At length some Christian gets up and mentions some passage—such as, 'Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, &c.,' and wishing to have the Scriptural *marks* of such. Thus, then, the *question* is fairly launched. The presiding minister having turned up the passage, announces it again to the people, and opens it by making a few pertinent remarks as an introduction, and indicating the line of discussion which it is expected will be followed. He then calls upon such and such a man—some Christian from a neighbouring parish—to rise and give his opinion on the subject. This he generally at the first request refuses, but being told that he is setting a bad example for the day, he agrees; and having smoothed down his hair, adjusted his mantle or plaid, and taking his staff, he gets up, looks round, professes his own unsuitableness for the service, but gives what he thinks are true marks—generally from his own experience—and to this it is owing that there is generally so little hesitation in these extempore effusions. It is not theoretical but practical Divinity that is given forth, and that with an unction and a pathos that clearly shows they have not learned from books, but that they speak *as* they believe, and *because* they believe they have been taught of the Holy Ghost.

"A word in regard to the audience. It might amount to upwards of 1000, and of all ages. There might be seen an occasional sheep farmer, if a native of the district, but never a factor. There might also be seen the old and hardened in sin and the thoughtless youth; in short, the various elements of which an ordinary congregation is composed. As the speakers seldom

exceeded a quarter of an hour each, there was no occasion for the attention to flag, and the variety kept it up during the whole time, which was from three to five hours according to circumstances. . . .

"If you will not be fatigued, I will continue my sketch: and here let me remind you that the individuals I mention are no fanciful creation, and that I give their real names, and, so far as I am able, their real characters. Many of them, alas! have gone to join the general assembly on high, but there are some of them still [1853] living. 'Is Niel Bain from Assynt here?' asks the moderator, as he scans the faces of the congregation; all eyes instinctively are pointed to the spot where the worthy man is seated. Then, assured by this that he is, he says, 'Niel, will you speak to the question?' The individual thus appealed to unhesitatingly gets up—for he is a man in whose very countenance there is exemplified that 'perfect *love* which casteth out fear.' He is an aged man with a head bald on the top but encircled with a wreath of silvery hair. His eye is blue, his face round, his complexion clear, and a beautiful smile lights up not only his mouth but his countenance. He is dressed in a blue coat with gilt buttons, and in corduroy shorts, and over all is thrown a blue cloth mantle with a deep cape. He has no difficulty in speaking to the question—he speaks *con amore* —not for the love of speaking, but from his love to the subject which is treated of. I could not in those years resist a tendency I felt to associate the personal appearance of such 'Men' with some of the Scripture characters, and worthy Niel Bain was to my imagination the beau ideal of the apostle John—the loving disciple. What he spoke had a wonderfully telling influence, for you felt he did not speak *about* the truth—he gave forth that which had permeated the faculties of his own soul.

"If Niel was the personification of the apostle John—the next who gets up, Angus Calder, is a very different person. He had what you would conceive as having been the look of Ezekiel. He was a tall dark-complexioned man, with a countenance which seemed as if cast in bronze, a sharp black eye deeply set in the head and surmounted by shaggy eyebrows. His hair

was long and dark-brown, and he wore a greatcoat made of homespun cloth. His look was downcast, his voice was deep but not harsh, and though he knew the greatest of all the graces, like the individual who preceded him, he did not choose to follow this path. He took a deeper and darker one, and had a sort of morbid delight in revisiting the Slough of Despond, in again unmasking the hypocrites he had met with in his journey, or in threading again the labyrinth out of whose miry clay his own feet had been extricated; you felt that before you stood one who had deep experience in the Christian warfare.

"Who is that man who has just concluded that remarkable prayer towards the middle of the service? His name is Andrew Ross. He is a native of Ross-shire, but has been residing in the parish of Tongue during the greater part of his long life. As you may perceive, his outward man is now failing; but the inward is growing day by day. The shock of corn is fully ripe, and may at any time be brought to the garner above. He is one of the most spiritually minded men in the north. Did you not observe the extraordinary nearness of access which he had to God in that prayer which he has just offered up, and the peculiar expression he made use of in addressing the Almighty?—'Everlasting Love'—and as often as the word escaped his lips the whole physical frame became agitated, his voice became choked, and his eyes rained down tears; but they were not the tears of remorse, but those of overpowering love. He is one whose spirit longs to be with Christ, which is far better—its very workings after emancipation will soon loose the pins of the frail tabernacle, and the soul of the man who stands before you will then find itself at rest and at home.

"George Campbell, a Gaelic schoolmaster, and a native of Sutherland, renews the discussion. He is a man about sixty, dressed in a camlet cloak, and with a head of long steel-grey hair, parted in the midst, and falling down in a mass behind. His features are well proportioned, and a quick intelligence courses over them as the aurora borealis does across his native sky. He is one of nature's orators; and so well toned was his voice, so harmonious his periods, and so graceful his action, that

it was like music to the ear. But all this was sanctified; and as he discourseth of what the Lord had done for his soul, they would be indifferent indeed who could do else than listen; and though in general he showed the harmlessness of the dove, there were occasions when he could testify that he had the spirit of the lion. If he had but occasion to allude to 'Radical' [Separatist] principles, his denunciation of them had something tremendous about it. Our testimony to him would infer that he was a man who knew divinity not only experimentally but systematically."*

Such were the Friday meetings and the men by whom they were conducted. The object was to prepare the minds of the people for engaging with benefit to themselves in the services which followed. Of the Communion Sabbath itself, and its peculiar solemnity, we give as an example what took place at Snizort:—

"In the kind providence of God, a bright, sunny day dawned; and though the wind was cold, and clouds began to appear, it was pronounced to be favourable for out-door services. At an early hour the people began to assemble; along the roads and by-ways, over hill and moor, they were seen flocking in companies to the house of God. It was a scene of thrilling interest, fitted to call forth the joyful admiration of every pious heart, to see so many thronging the roads for miles—coming up, like Israel's ancient tribes, to worship God; and the sight of the people at once suggested David's thought as the feeling of many that morning: 'I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.' It is supposed that nearly 3000 people assembled together from all parts of Skye and the neighbouring isles. The audience would even have been much larger, but a great many of the men and some of the women were away from the island at the time, working at the fisheries or railways. Round the spot where the field-preaching was held, the fields and roads were lined with horses and ponies, gigs, carts, and vehicles of every description, which were used in conveying the people from a distance. Others, again, came in boats, which were lying at

* Disr. Mss. lvi.

anchor in the neighbouring bay. The scene presented at the field-preaching was most impressive; one cannot imagine a finer subject for a painter's pencil or a poet's pen.

"The tent in which the minister stood was pitched at the foot of a sloping hill, gradually rising in an undulating form till it terminated in a heathery knoll. On a smooth sward, in front of the tent, the table, covered with clean white linen, was prepared. The whole face of the little hill was clothed with people, some lying on the green grass and on the slopes of the hill, others sitting on pieces of rock, or stools provided for the occasion. Round the outskirts of the crowd lay the little children and younger portion of the audience, who had come to witness the solemn scene. Within this circle lay the older portion of the people, while nearer to the tent, and close to the communion-table, sat the catechists and elders. The Rev. Roderick Macleod preached to this large and interesting congregation from the appropriate words in Ps. xl. 6-8. And during the time that the venerable Moderator was engaged in this Gaelic service, the Rev. Mr. Gualter was conducting the English service in the church to a smaller audience, consisting of those families in the neighbourhood who spoke the English language, and of strangers from Edinburgh and Glasgow, and other parts of the mainland, who had come to spend a few weeks in this beautiful island.

"At the conclusion of the service the English congregation left the church and joined the Gaelic congregation in the fields. Just as they approached, the invitation to come forward to the first Gaelic communion-table was being issued. After a few minutes' profound silence, a venerable old man wrapped in a shepherd's plaid came slowly forward and took his seat; soon after he was followed by others, who advanced to the table in the same slow and reverential manner, till it was filled with about forty communicants. And when seated, there was no staring about, nor appearance of thoughtlessness; but each head, wrapped in a mantle or plaid, was bent in solemn reverence, as if engaged in heavenly communion with Him whose death they were met to commemorate. The second table was served in English; and after this three other tables were administered

in Gaelic. The whole services, which lasted about seven hours and a-half, were brought to a close by an earnest and impressive address by the Rev. Dr. Mackay. The immense audience then slowly dispersed; some returning to their homes, others to quiet retreats on the hill-sides to pray, while many others retired to the church, where a prayer meeting was conducted by the elders for other two hours." *

The better class of "The Men"—as distinguished from the extreme party — without exception joined the Free Church. From his personal experience, Hugh Miller speaks of them in the highest terms: "We think we must know nearly as much about 'The Men' of the North as any one else. We have resided in districts in which they were comparatively numerous; we saw in early life our first parish minister (a good and wise man, who knew their value) surrounded by a session almost exclusively composed of them; at an after period we were tolerably intimate with a few very noble specimens of the class."†

Others who are not identified with the Free Church have borne testimony not less decided. Professor Blackie, after full inquiry, records his opinion that they were "thoughtful and serious Highland peasants, deeply impressed with the importance of religious and moral truth," whose object was to stir up the people to "a loving consciousness and a consistent practice of the Christian faith which they professed."‡

A minister of the Established Church, while fully alive to certain drawbacks connected with the Friday meetings, yet gives it as his opinion that the general results were highly beneficial: "I learned from the speakers the best notes and sayings of the most noted divines in the country, and it was always the sayings of most pith and significance that obtained currency among the people. I may say that I got much more of real divinity from 'The Men' than ever I got at the Divinity Hall."

It is right, however, that some account should be given of

* *Miss. Record*, 1863, p. 353.
† *Witness*, 8th November, 1851.
‡ Altavona, p. 332.

that class of "The Men"—the extreme section—who absented themselves from church, set up rival services, and sought to draw away the people. Dr. M'Lauchlan describes their origin: "The system is said to have originated in the parish of Kildonan, in Sutherland. About the beginning of this century it was the custom in the North Highlands to have the communion dispensed only once in the two years. With the growth of religious life, however, among the people, the desire was often felt to have the ordinance more frequently dispensed, and on one occasion this desire was strongly expressed by the good "Men" of the parish to the minister of Kildonan. He differed from them, and probably not liking the excitement consequent on a great gathering, he agreed on condition that only one week should elapse between the intimation of the sacrament and the day of its dispensation. This was, however, enough. Messengers were sent to all the neighbouring parishes to let the people know, and a great concourse of worshippers convened on the Sabbath of the communion. The ordinance was to have been dispensed in the church, but the building was not capable of containing one half of the people. The elders came to tell the minister that they must meet outside, as the people could not find room in the church. His reply was, 'If not, there are doors to keep them out.' This was enough; a famous man, John Grant, with another like himself, withdrew with a host of followers to a neighbouring hillside, and kept a meeting of their own while the services were conducted in the church. The spirit which was generated that day continued and spread over large sections of the country, and led to the formation of a party strongly opposed to the Church and its ministers."

The real cause of this disaffection was the state of the Church itself. On the highest authority* we are told that hardly any part of Scotland was more intensely moderate during the latter part of last century than Caithness and large portions of the neighbouring county of Sutherland. There was just one pulpit in Caith-

* For the facts stated in this and the following paragraph, we are indebted to a valuable letter, signed "M.," which appeared in the *Witness* newspaper of 10th March, 1852. It is from the pen of the Rev. Dr. M'Lauchlan.

ness from which the Gospel of Christ issued in its purity. Among the other parishes you might have found one in which the minister was so careless that he passed his lifetime with only three sermons, which he read and read till his whole parishioners found their amusement in rehearsing them; in another, there was the rankest heresy, while in another there was utter stupidity, if not gross immorality. Among the people true religion kept its hold, but they were disgusted with the ministrations of the pulpit, and when their religion was left to itself and allowed to train itself, what wonder if in many cases it ran wild? The people drew off, and began to set up in their secluded glens meetings of their own. The consequence was as might have been expected. In many cases a fanatical spirit manifested itself; all ministers were denounced, and church membership was repudiated. The misfortune was that the hostility was directed not only against ministers of indifferent character or those destitute of zeal and earnestness, but was cherished with equal intensity against many of the best and most faithful ministers in the country. So true it is that when party spirit enters it knows no bounds, but extends to everything that does not yield to itself.

At the time of the Disruption the party was not numerous. In Caithness, it was confined almost entirely to the two parishes of Latheron and Reay. In Ross-shire, there were a few in the parish of Fodderty, and some scattered individuals through parts of Sutherland. In Inverness and Moray, they had penetrated into the parishes of Daviot, Moy, and Duthil, and a small section of Kilmorack. In Arran, also, some traces of the same spirit were found, but over the whole 200 parishes which constituted the Highlands there were not so many as ten in which these parties had any real footing.

Among their number there were some who, like their leader, Alexander Gair, were sincere Christian men. But there were others of whom Mr. Findlater speaks as holding "Antinomian views, which at times they carry into practice." Of their separatist meetings some account is given by Dr. A. Mackay the biographer of Mr. Davidson of Latheron, who writes from personal observation:—

"When such meetings were held during church hours the attendance was usually very small, for Mr. Davidson was greatly respected by the whole body of his parishioners. After the reading of Scripture, there were addresses, usually giving a highly allegorical interpretation of the passage read. The degeneracy of the times was much insisted on, and the prevailing fashions of dress were vigorously condemned. We well remember, when a student at college, going to hear Alexander Gair—by far the most gifted, original, and talented of these laymen—accompanied by two of our college companions. We were seated immediately behind the bench occupied by the speakers. Alexander Gair delivered the opening address, and fairly astonished us by the sparkling brilliancy of his oratory, by his wonderful acquaintance with Scripture—by the ingenious, original, but often highly mystical interpretations he assigned to many passages, by his scathing invectives against many classes of evil-doers, and by his awful denunciations of 'graceless ministers.' Then, turning round so as to have the students fully in view, he exclaimed: 'Which of you young ministers will begin his first sermon with the words—May the curse of God alight on the ministers?'"*

If the leading men of the party could speak thus, the lesser men, it may well be believed, were guilty of still greater extravagance, and sometimes of absurdity. An effort was made by a defender of the Establishment in Disruption times to collect the worst specimens of their sayings, which were represented as characteristic of the whole body of "The Men," and then the discredit of them was attempted to be fastened on the Free Church as it existed in the North.

This was doubly unfair. That party of separatists was repudiated by many of "The Men" themselves—as by James M'Donald, father of Dr. M'Donald, William Calder, and many others who defended the Church and her faithful ministers. In fact, the party "were hemmed in by a body of intelligent Christian 'Men'" who stood opposed to them. On this point Mr. Findlater expresses himself in decided terms: "The whole class are well known in the Highlands—every child there

* Life of Mr. Davidson, p. 184.

could draw the distinction between them and 'The Men.' I am anxious that the distinction should be clearly understood."*

The attempt to identify the Free Church in the North with the extreme party was, if possible, still more unfair. "Few of them sympathised with us during the controversy when it really became serious, and few of them joined us at the Disruption. Joseph Mackay, at Reay, their leader in the northern portion of Caithness, avowedly adhered to the Establishment, and withdrew himself altogether from the ministry of the Free Church there."† Alexander Gair, also, already referred to, never appeared within the door of the Free Church at ordinary worship, but usually held rival meetings during the hours of Divine service.

At Farr, Mr. Mackenzie met with the same spirit: "Some who made a high profession of superior knowledge and zeal, and inveighed loudly and bitterly against the Church of Scotland before the Disruption, are now very cold towards the Free Church, and in some cases hostile."

There was often much difficulty in dealing with this class. Mr. Carment, of Rosskeen, set his face determinedly against them, came to an open rupture, lost a few of his people, but so few that it made no perceptible difference in his large congregation, which continued till his death one of the largest in Ross-shire. In other parts of the country, where the party were resident in greater force, ministers in some cases felt that they would do more harm than good by any open attempt to put them down. We ask special attention, however, to the account which Dr. M'Lauchlan gives from his own experience of the difficulties of such a position, and of the way in which they could best be overcome:—

"In the parishes of Moy, Daviot, and Duthil, the catechist was a native of Caithness, and belonged to this party. He was a man of talent and character, and was followed by a large section of the people. Most of these very rarely attended worship in the parish church, never joined in the communion, and

* Disr. Mss. lvi. pp. 18-20.

† Dr. M'Lauchlan—*Witness*, 10th March, 1852.

were most unsparing in their criticisms on ministers and their supporters. In such circumstances, as might be expected, religion ceased to flourish, party spirit took its place, and parishes that had been distinguished for Christian life and earnestness, became gradually spiritual wastes. In the parishes of Moy and Dalarossie at least, the men who could take part in public religious meetings from being numerous came to be very few; while the communicants connected with the Church were latterly not above a dozen, and these not all of the number who were most esteemed in the parish for their religious character. . . . The church was attended chiefly by the young and careless, while the older people, and those who made a religious profession, either stayed at home or attended meetings of their own. There was some religious life, but it was narrow and exclusive in its character, and ready to be censorious in judging of anything that differed from itself, however earnest and sincere. In the earlier days of the writer, the ministers most esteemed in the quarter were the Rev. Dr. M'Donald, of Ferintosh; the Rev. Donald Fraser, of Kirkhill; the Rev. John Kennedy, of Redcastle, and some others; but those most excellent ministers were not held in repute by the party to which I refer, and it was only on rare occasions that they would go to hear them. I am free to confess that I was at one time somewhat impressed by the views maintained by this section of the community. I thought them faithful, earnest, and anxious for the purity of the Church, and was somewhat disposed to sympathise with them. Time and experience, however, have led me to think differently; and without denying to them in the least the merit of honesty in what they said and did, I believe they made a poor representation of a loving Christianity beyond their own immediate party, and afforded a poor specimen of the activities which should characterise the Christian life. . . .

"At the time of my settlement the parish was still divided, and there was much to discourage any young minister. There were a few good pious men, but they were chiefly among the dissentients, and the general state of religion was low. I set about visiting and catechising so soon as I could, after my settlement. It was rather an arduous undertaking, especially in winter, for

some of the people were sixteen miles distant from the manse, and the winters were usually stormy. Still I overtook the work and found the benefit of it. The people began to frequent the parish church in larger numbers and the congregation increased manifestly in members and interest. There was a strong tide of prejudice against the ministry to contend with, but gradually the prejudice became weaker and was supplanted by a considerable degree of warmth."*

The work which had thus been so effectively carried on the Disruption completed, dissension of every kind rapidly disappeared, "and there is not a more united people now within the Free Church of Scotland."†

Mr. Mackenzie of Farr, we have already seen, had similar difficulties to encounter, and he too describes the softening effect of the Disruption:—

"We have continued this Friday exercise since the Disruption, and in regard to my experience in my own congregation, I can candidly declare I never had greater satisfaction in such exercises than during the three communion solemnities we have had since we left the Establishment. It seemed to me that worthy Christians had more than ordinary freedom in communicating the marks of God's dealing with their souls, in converting and building up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation. There was an unction of brotherly love and unity which was truly gratifying, and a shrinking from every ingredient of the old leaven of division, which through the injudicious remarks of certain conceited speakers had on former occasions frequently disturbed the harmony which ought to prevail."

Stornoway, Creich, and other localities are referred to by Mr. Findlater, where the people had drawn back from the Church and held meetings of their own; but after the sacrifice of 1843 they gave over the invectives in which they were accustomed to indulge against the Church, "returned within her pale, and are now among her staunchest supporters."

Even Alexander Gair, after his life-long attitude of opposition

* Disr. Mss. xlix. pp. 4-6.

† *Ibid.*, p. 12.

and separation, gave way at last. Mr. Davidson, the minister, hearing that he was on his death-bed, went to visit him, and the interview is said to have been affecting. "The dying saint embraced him affectionately, assuring him that after the unambiguous testimony he had emitted at the time of the Disruption, and the noble sacrifices he had then made for Christ's cause, he had become perfectly reconciled to him, believing him to be a true servant of the Lord who had the welfare of souls at heart."

It is the testimony of one who well knew the whole circumstances, that "the Disruption and its consequences did more to put down the disorders connected with this class of men than all other agencies."

LIII. The Ladies' Associations.

The Church, as we have seen, was at the outset confronted with the difficulty of providing supply for 150 vacant congregations in the Highlands, while only thirty-one of her licensed probationers could use the Gaelic language. At her call eighty young men from those districts offered themselves for the ministry, but it was no easy task to provide for the long course of education required. Though some aid was given by the Highland Committee, the matter obviously required to be taken up in a more systematic and effective way.

To Dr. Mackintosh Mackay, then of Dunoon, the Church was indebted for the suggestion that the training of such students might be carried on in connection with a scheme for the education and religious improvement of the remote Highlands and Islands. At the General Assembly of 1850 he stated that there were "hundreds and thousands of children in the outer Hebrides and along the coasts of the mainland growing up in ignorance of the very elements of knowledge." His idea was that aid-schools should be established in the more destitute localities, to be taught by students; and along with this a scheme might be devised enabling the young men to pass through the usual course of college training. The proposal thus made was not allowed to fall out of sight. Most fortunately, as the event proved, Dr. Mackay resolved to appeal for help to the ladies of Scotland, and more especially to those of Edinburgh and Glasgow. It happened to the writer to be present at one of the interviews in which he explained his views to the lady who, in future years, acted as secretary at Edinburgh, and has all along done so much for the cause. The clamant nature of the demand and the best methods of meeting it were dwelt on with great earnestness. In various

quarters the subject was in this way fully considered in private; plans were matured, and the work was entered on with characteristic energy.

At Edinburgh the first steps were taken. A list was made of twelve of the principal Free Church congregations; one lady in each was asked to invite ten or twelve others belonging to the congregation; and the result was that a large attendance was present to meet with Dr. Mackay in the old Bible Society's Rooms, York Place, on the 20th of November, 1850, when the Edinburgh Ladies' Association was formed. In the following April the work was begun with the opening of five schools in the island of Harris. Similar steps were taken at Glasgow, where an association was also formed, and down to the present day the work goes on with unabated zeal. Never did Christian ladies meet with a more congenial sphere of work, never were their efforts conducted with more devoted zeal or with more practical wisdom, and never were they crowned with more signal success. In all this, it is right to say, they received from Dr. M'Lauchlan, of Edinburgh, most valuable counsel and aid.

Certainly the educational destitution of many of those outlying districts in the Highlands and Islands was very great. Even so late as 1872—before the passing of the Education Act—it was reported by a Royal Commission that in the whole range of the Hebrides only twenty-four out of the 1000 of the population could sign their names. Twenty years previously—at the time when these Associations began—the state of the people was much worse. "When the island of Eriskay, in the Southern Hebrides, was visited by an agent of the Glasgow Ladies' Association, he took a careful census of the whole island, and found that out of a population of over 300 only three persons could read, and there was only one copy of the Scriptures on the island, with the fragment of another copy. . . . In the island of Rum, with a considerable population, there had been no school within the memory of man until the Association (Glasgow) planted a school there."*

It was to meet such a state of things that these Ladies' Associations began their work. The plan proposed by Dr. Mackay was that schools should be set up in neglected localities,

*Statement by Rev. A. C. Fullarton, Glasgow.

to be taught from April on through summer and autumn by students from the Highlands who, during winter, should attend college, passing through the regular course of education for the ministry. Their absence from these schools for five months in the year was no doubt a disadvantage, but usually they devoted special attention to some promising pupil, whom they trained to act as a paid substitute, interchanging between the different schools, and carrying on the work in their absence. This was the more easily done because in many localities, owing to the great distances and the state of the roads, the attendance of the younger children in the winter months was much diminished. The substitutes, of course, were coming forward ultimately to take the place of the teachers when their course of study was finished, and so a continuous supply of students was kept up.

Even the absence of the teachers during the college session was not without compensating advantages. As a rule, they were young men of ability and of devoted Christian character; and when they came down each returning spring, fresh from the mental stimulus of university life, they were found to throw themselves into the work with all the ardour of youthful zeal. The course of instruction was adapted to each locality, Gaelic being invariably the language of the school, especially in teaching the Bible and Catechism. English was also included, and, for the most part, some of the usual branches of an English education, instruction being at the same time given, according to the use and wont of Scotland, in Latin,* Greek, and mathematics, wherever there were advanced pupils prepared to profit by it.

The result was satisfactory to a high degree. Strangers from a distance—Englishmen and others—who visited these schools so humble in outward appearance, were often taken by surprise, when they found what was going on, and in some cases wrote to express their approbation in the strongest terms. It may be enough, however, to refer to two authorities whose opinion is entitled to the greatest deference.

* This was taken advantage of. In the schools of South Uist, for example, there were fifteen pupils learning Latin—four in the parish school, eleven in the schools of the Ladies' Association.—Parliamentary Report, by Alex. Nicolson, Esq., Advocate, p. 41.

The first is an elaborate Parliamentary report, prepared by Alex. Nicolson, Esq., Advocate, on the state of education in the Hebrides. After referring to certain defects—the limited income of the Associations, and the absence of the teachers during winter—he goes on to speak of the schools: "I can only attribute their generally high character to the prevalence among the teachers of something of that missionary spirit which I have elsewhere spoken of as demanded in these regions. They are all young men, and though many of them have received no special training as teachers, they often make up for the want of it by a large amount of the earnestness and activity still more essential to the life of a school." *

Not less emphatic is the testimony of Dr. Duff, referring to a visit to one of the schools in Harris: "I can only say that I was at once delighted and astonished at the progress of the pupils in circumstances so unpropitious, considering the singularly rugged and uncouth materials on which the teacher had to operate. The order, the discipline, the amount of solid instruction, and especially Bible instruction, imparted within so short a time, was such as to justify the fullest expression of confidence in him, and of thankfulness to God on account of the inestimable benefits conferred by your Society. On the spot the involuntary exclamation was,—Would to God that the operations of the Society were similarly extended over all these destitute isles." †

The poverty of the people made it impossible to charge fees, and the teaching accordingly was free. Indeed it was necessary to provide clothing for many of the children, if they were to attend school. This led to much attention being given to the industrial department, and sewing mistresses were attached to many of the schools "so as to teach the young women needlework and knitting." In this part of the work many of the ladies took a special interest, and when the young student-teachers went North at the end of each college session, they usually took with them "large parcels of clothing." This

* Report on the State of Education in the Hebrides, by Alex. Nicolson, Esq., Advocate, pp. 91, 92.

† *Missionary Record*, March, 1853, p. 207.

department has gone on increasing so that in the year 1882 upwards of fifty packages were despatched; "but that is nothing in comparison with the boon conferred on the girls who attend these schools by teaching them to sew and make clothes for themselves. A most wonderful change has been wrought, not only in the outward appearance but in the whole habits of the young people."

Invaluable as all this was, the educational work was only a means to a higher end—"the religious improvement" of these remote localities, and the bringing forward of Gaelic-speaking young men for the work of the ministry. Strictly speaking, the schools were missionary schools. The young men were preparing for license, and they in very many cases gave themselves to missionary work in the midst of a neglected population. Very generally they were young men of devoted piety, and the school became a centre of religious life. Among the outlying hamlets far from church they visited the sick, held religious meetings attended by young and old, gaining experience which fitted them for the future work of their lives. These services were highly prized, and in some cases much spiritual blessing is known to have followed.

Outside the Highlands, comparatively few are aware of the scale on which this work has been carried on.

The Edinburgh Association have had schools for longer or shorter periods at 116 stations, and given aid at 17 others—133 in all. The great object was to select the most necessitous places all over the Highlands and Islands. Even in 1882, after the work has been interfered with by the Parochial School Boards, a large number of stations are still kept up, and will probably continue to be required in localities too remote for School Boards to reach.

In these pages, however, our main object is to record the help given to the Church in recruiting the ranks of the ministry.

The number of students employed down to 1882 has been in all, 307.

Of these—

18 died before completing their studies.

30 are now employed as probationers, teachers, and medical men.

27 are on the present staff.

87 were licensed and ordained as ministers of the Free Church, of whom 5 have died, leaving 82 at present in full work. Of the others, a large proportion went to the Colonies, where in some cases they are known to have been eminently useful.

In Glasgow a similar association was formed contemporaneously with that of Edinburgh, and though on a less extensive scale, it has yet been enabled to render important service in the same cause. The especial field of its operations was South Uist, Benbecula, and the neighbouring islands, where the great majority of the population are Roman Catholics. In these localities—among the most destitute in Scotland—about fifty young men have been employed, sixteen of whom have gone on to the ministry, for the most part in the Free Church, but a few in the Colonies. Four are doctors of medicine, and one a medical missionary, "giving promise of great usefulness."

All this required considerable outlay. There was the expense of keeping up the schools, finding an income for the teachers, and clothing for many of the children; and there was the money needed to support the young men while attending college. The remarkable thing is that, without any grant from the Church, the whole funds were raised by the ladies in the form of private subscriptions and legacies. In Edinburgh, the income for the first year was £378 and this gradually increased till it rose to about £2000 annually—a sum which in some instances was exceeded. The whole amount for the thirty-one years has been £44,684, 8s. 10d.; and to this must be added the cost of a considerable amount of clothing—an absolute necessity in some localities if the little Highland children were to be able to attend school.

It is hardly possible to over-estimate the blessings which these schools have conferred on the population of these remote localities. "The object aimed at"—one who knew them well has said—"was to give a Christian education to the young, both in English and Gaelic, and thus enable them to work their

way in the world. To a very large extent this has been accomplished. In these districts a very large proportion of the people —especially the younger portion of them—can read and write and understand English and speak it. Large numbers of the young men have been able to work their way to the Lowlands, to the sea and the Colonies, and young women to make their way into domestic service. Besides, those who traversed the Roman Catholic islands thirty-two years ago, and who have traversed them again recently, are forcibly impressed with the improved moral tone of the community and the manifest softening of the animosity arising from different religious beliefs, and the appreciation, in some measure, of the gentle and loving spirit of the New Testament."*

For more than thirty years these two Ladies' Associations have wrought harmoniously side by side. Recently they have resolved to combine their forces, and the united Association has now a staff of seventy teachers, including sewing mistresses, maintained for the year 1882 at an expenditure of £1792, 6s. 11½d.

Their work, however, is by no means finished. "The Education Act (1872) has undoubtedly been a great boon to the Highlands, as well as to other parts of Scotland. . . . But the villages and hamlets in many parts of the Highlands are so scattered, and the land so poor and the rents so small, that no reasonable rate laid on the rental can enable the School Boards to meet the educational requirements. Take, for example, the large parish of South Uist, about thirty miles long, with a low range of uninhabited mountains running through its entire length, separating the flat and more densely-populated plain to the west from the fishing villages on the lochs and bays of the east. All the public schools are on the flat plain to the west, and the villages on Lochuskevagh, Lochcarnan, Locheynart, Lochskipport, and Lochboisdale, have no public school within reasonable distance. Unless in so far as the Ladies' Association cares for the educational wants of these villages, they are uncared for." This example—and there are other localities in which the same thing holds good—may serve to show that the

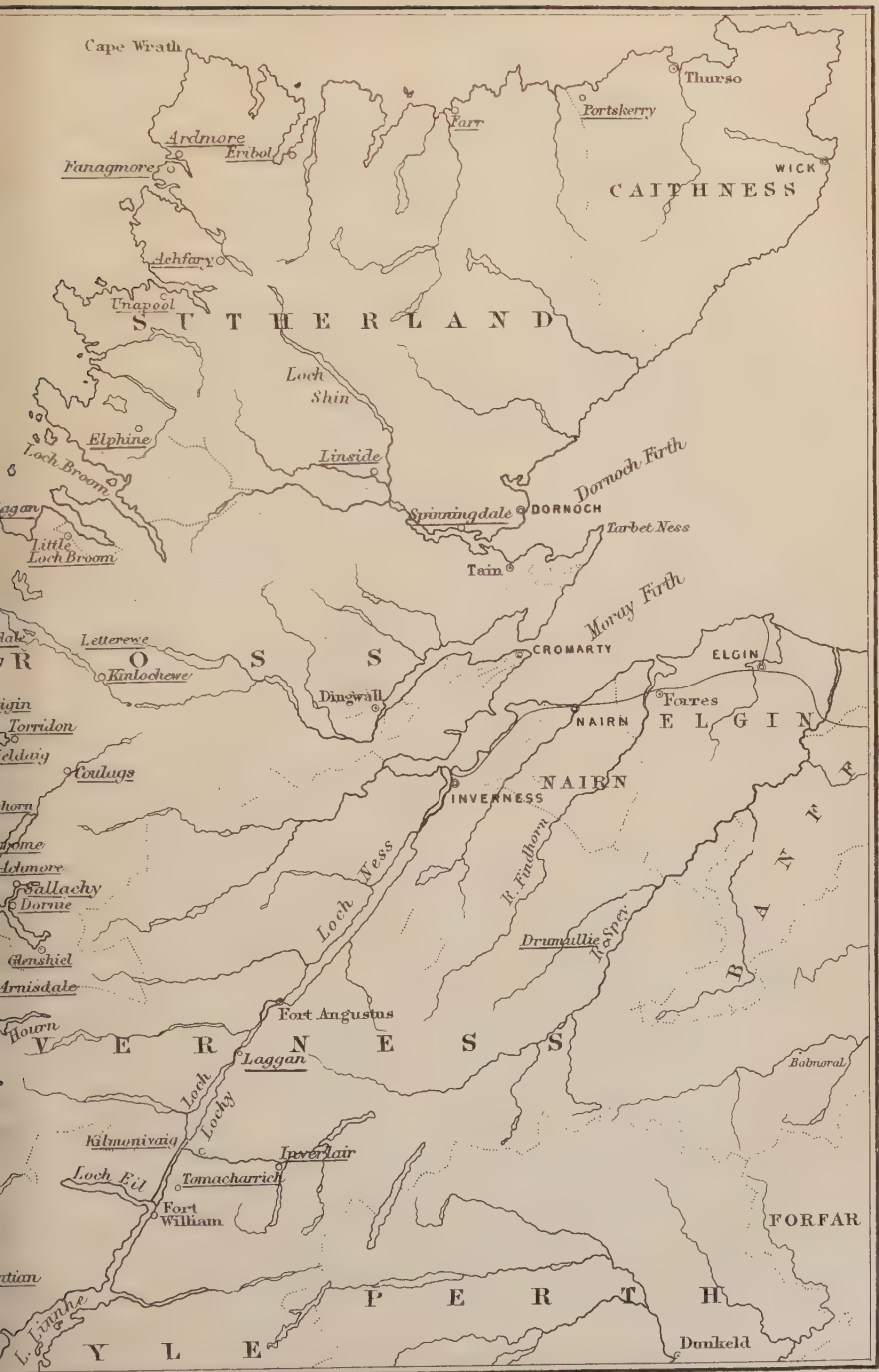
* Statement by Rev. A. C. Fullarton, Glasgow.

work which has been so blessed in the past will still be required in the future.*

But, apart from these educational results among the people, there is the outstanding fact that so many young men able to speak the Gaelic language have been trained for the work of the ministry. Besides medical men and professional teachers, there have come forth from these schools nearly one hundred who have been ordained over Free Church congregations, and no one can look over the list of their names, and take note of the important positions which many of these young ministers hold, without feeling how much has been done for the cause of true religion, and what a debt of gratitude the Free Church owes to these Ladies' Associations. So quietly and unobtrusively have their operations been carried on that very many of our ministers and members are hardly aware of what has been done. No names must be mentioned here, but the friends who have taken the lead in this labour of love are well known in many a distant home, and will be long held in grateful remembrance by every friend of the Highlands.

* Statement by Rev. A. C. Fullarton, Glasgow.

MAP
Showing the localities occupied
by the LADIES' SCHOOLS in the
HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS
OF
SCOTLAND.
HEBRIDES
OR
WESTERN
ISLES
Butt of Lewis
Lional
Barvas
Tolsta
Bragar
Carloway
Bernera
Laxdale
Aird
Bayble
Knock
Stornoway
Grimshader
Sandwick
Scalisary
Aclunore
Raanish
Breanish
Loch Roag
Luirbost
Tromore
Kneresort
Balallan
Kershadder
Arnruick
Gruvir
Scarp
Rhenigadale
Leumara
Kilean
Anabaich
Taransay
Tarbet
Scadabay
Borve
Scalpay
Leaclee
Collam
Boreray
Sound of Harris
North
Uist
Paible
Heisker
Clachan
Caimie
Baleshore
Langlash
Grimisay
Vachdar
Benbecula
Hill
Loch Uskevagh
Iochdar
Loch Carnan
Loch Skiport
South
Stonybridge
Uist
Dalibho
Garynamonie
Eriskay
Borve
Ault
Mingalay
Barra Head
LITTLE
MINCH
Kilmaluag
Kilmuir
Lochbay
Arnisort
Glenhinnisdale
Ramasig
Borreraig
Snizort
Portree
Hardlosh
Perfeiler
Glens
Ramsay
Scalpa
Scorrybreck
Carbost
Elgol
Rhuandunan
Soay
Tarskavaig
Ord
Knock
Drumfe
Corna
Rum
Eigg
Muck
Coll
Cornaig
Ardnamurchan
Tiree
Sound of



W. & A.K. Johnston, Edinburgh

LIV. St. Kilda.

It has sometimes been asked how the population of the Highlands came to have such decided views on the questions which led to the Disruption. Did they really understand the headship of Christ, and how it was involved in the Ten Years' Conflict? The people of St. Kilda, for example, when they adhered to the Free Church, was their adherence intelligently given?

The island, as is well known, lies out in the Atlantic, far away beyond the Outer Hebrides—its bare rampart of precipitous rocks rising in rugged grandeur from the sea, inaccessible save where on the east there is an opening at which in certain states of the weather it is possible to land. Twenty years before the Disruption this loneliest and least-known portion of the British islands was inhabited by a population of 108 persons, among whom there was only one man—John Ferguson—who "could read to any purpose."

It was in the year 1822 that Dr. M'Donald, of Urquhart (Ferintosh), whose evangelistic labours were well known all over the North, resolved to pay a visit to St. Kilda,* at the instance of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge. On his way he went to see a minister in Harris, who stated that St. Kilda was part of his parish, but owned that he had never seen it. For a long course of years the people had been left destitute of religious ordinances.

The vessel in which Dr. M'Donald sailed belonged to "the tacksman" of the island, who went annually to receive his rents. On the 15th of September they sailed from the Long Island at 4.30 A.M., and though the voyage was somewhat delayed, yet by two o'clock they reached St. Kilda, where they

* Life of Dr. M'Donald, by Dr. Kennedy, p. 110 *et seq.*

were warmly welcomed, and the best accommodation which the island could afford was at once put at their disposal. That evening at six o'clock the whole population met in a barn, used as the school-house of a Gaelic teacher recently appointed, and Dr. M'Donald preached, taking as his text the message of "good will to men." It was the busiest season of the year—the scanty harvest of the island was being cut—the young solan geese, on which the people depended for their livelihood, had to be collected; but it was resolved that for the ten days during which the vessel remained, public worship should be held, at which they should all attend, every evening when the work of the day was over.

Now, we ask attention to the subjects selected by the preacher on that occasion. The sermons would be delivered with all the warmth and fervour by which Dr. M'Donald's preaching was distinguished; but the reader will observe they form a connected course of religious instruction, in which the hearers are carried forward through the most important truths relating to sin and salvation:—

16*th Sept.*—His discourse was on Rom. iii. 12: Showing the evil and the extent of sin. "Some of the hearers discovered signs of being affected, as if the view presented was new and alarming."

17*th Sept.*—The text was Rom. iii. 19; compared with Gal. iii. 10: Showing man's natural state as condemned under the law. "All listened with uncommon attention, and some were evidently impressed."

18*th Sept.*—The subject was taken from Rom. iii. 20: The impossibility of being justified by our own good works. "I could perceive that some were affected, and disposed to ask, What must we do?"

19*th Sept.*—The fourth sermon was on Rom. iii. 21: The righteousness of Christ as the ground of a sinner's forgiveness and acceptance. "While speaking of the Redeemer's sufferings, some appeared to be deeply impressed; there was something like a melting under the Word. The Cross, I see, is that which chiefly moves the sinner."

20*th Sept.*—Preached from Rom. iii. 22, on The manner in which the righteousness of Christ becomes ours. "Some, both old and young, were affected to tears, among others an old man upwards of sixty years of age."

21*st Sept.*—Preached from Rom. v. 1, on The effects of justification. "The Gaelic teacher told me that he saw this morning one of the people engaged earnestly at prayer in one of the fields—a new thing in St. Kilda."

22*nd Sept.*—Preached on The work of the Spirit. "At one time almost all were in tears."

While this course of sermons was going on he went freely among the people in private. All who ever met Dr. M'Donald know how frank and genial his nature was, and can well understand how welcome such intercourse must have been. One day, for example, he finds the whole population out in the harvest-field, every family busy cutting down their own small crop. They were eager for giving and receiving news. "I endeavoured to gratify them as much as I could, and they in return entertained me with all the little tales of their island. I found this gave me readier access to their minds."

One afternoon there was a diet of catechising held, which was pretty numerously attended. "Spoke to them of the excellence of the Shorter Catechism, heard the people most of the questions, and found that though they could not read they could repeat them with tolerable accuracy, but were deficient in their knowledge of the meaning of them."

It was to rouse and awaken their intelligence as well as to reach their hearts that the above course of sermons was delivered. Dr. M'Donald was the greatest Gaelic preacher of his day, dealing as none but he could with the minds of his Highland countrymen; but his grand object was to present God's truth objectively, so as to convince the reason, and through the reason to impress the heart.

This style of preaching was sought and relished all over the North. However much or however little of secular education the people might have, yet on the great principles of Divine truth it was no vague or superficial mode of treatment that would satisfy them. It is surely a striking illustration of this

which meets us here, when Dr. M'Donald is breaking ground in St. Kilda, and asking these simple-minded people to enter into the strong arguments and powerful appeals of the great apostle.

It was at the close of the services, however, that they began to show how the truth had taken hold of their minds. His last two sermons were from 2 Cor. v. 17. Many were much impressed—some in tears—among others, the old man formerly referred to. "On my hinting that this would be the closing sermon, they all began to weep. The scene quite overcame me. I concluded abruptly."

Next morning the whole—men, women, and children—came down to the shore, and amidst cries and tears, in which my landlord and I were obliged to share, we shook hands. After we got under weigh they ascended the brow of a steep hill and sat, following us with their eyes, till our little bark became no longer visible."

During next winter his thoughts were often dwelling on St. Kilda, and the following May found him on his way to revisit the people. On catching sight of his approach they flew down to the shore, and when he stepped on land "they all pressed round me," he says, "and grasped my hand, each in his two, till I thought they would have wrung the very blood out of it." Few words passed, but there were tears—"God knows my heart was full."

On this occasion they had service twice a-day, with a still more systematic course of religious instruction, both doctrinal and practical—the details of which need not be given.

A resident teacher had been appointed by the Gaelic School Society, and Dr. M'Donald held an examination of his school. The scholars numbered fifty-seven, including fifteen or sixteen married persons—fully half the population of the island. "The appearance they made was wonderful."

On this second visit the hearts of the people were more open to receive the Gospel. The old man previously referred to had lost his eyesight. "On my saying it would be well if his mental eyes were opened—

"'I trust they are,' he said.

"'But what then do you see?'

"'That I am blind—that in myself I am a ruined sinner, but Christ is an Almighty Saviour.'

"'But what if He is not willing?'

"'Willing! would He die for sinners if He were not willing to save them?—No! no!'"

The impression seems to have been general. "It was delightful in the evening, between nine and ten o'clock, to hear the praises of God and prayer ascending from almost every family—a new thing in St. Kilda."

It now became necessary to think of some provision being made for the regular supply of religious ordinances. Dr. M'Donald went forth over the country and succeeded in raising a sum of £800 for the erection of a church and manse. It was not till the summer of 1830, however, that the buildings were ready—when Mr. N. Mackenzie was appointed as an ordained missionary, and Dr. M'Donald went to introduce him to his flock. After a warm and cordial welcome and a fortnight of religious services as on former years, the parting came. In his last sermon he "sought to lead their views to the cross of Christ and fix them there, and told them I felt both joy and sorrow—joy that I left with them a Gospel minister—and sorrow that on this very account I should in all probability see them no more. After this the whole house became a *Bochim*" (a place of weeping).

Trained for twenty years in these views of Divine truth, the men of St. Kilda were not unprepared to appreciate the questions which arose in 1843. Within four years of that last visit of Dr. M'Donald the great struggle had begun. Mr. Mackenzie, the resident pastor, was one of the evangelical party, and is said to have kept the people well informed as to the course of events. When the Disruption came, he disappointed his former friends by leaving his post and going over to the opposite party—seeking a living within the Establishment; but the whole people of St. Kilda without one dissenting voice resolved to attach themselves to the Free Church.

As in many other cases, they had trials to encounter at the hands of the proprietor, who locked up church and manse to

keep out any one belonging to the Free Church, and refused ground on which the people might build for themselves.

There were peculiarities in the case which made it a hard one. The building had been erected, not by the heritor or proprietor, but by money raised from the public by subscription. It had been subscribed expressly for the benefit of the St. Kilda people, and now they were locked out. It is quite possible that the proprietor, having given the site, had the legal right to do what he did; but it was a strong step to take, to shut out Dr. M'Donald, who had built the church, and the people for whom it was built.

There was, however, a more serious question. The whole island belonged to this single proprietor. The nearest land was sixty miles off, across a sea so stormy that for the greater part of the year landing at St. Kilda is all but impossible. In such a case the question is forced on us whether a proprietor is entitled to deny a site. He has his right to the soil, but is he authorised to push his right so far as to refuse the people the means of worshipping God according to their consciences? Was not the proprietor of St. Kilda practically suspending the law of religious toleration?

Yet for ten years this went on. No noise was made. Quietly and patiently the people continued tilling the inhospitable soil —paying their rents and determinedly adhering to their principles, while church and manse, which were theirs in equity, stood locked up and empty.

Meantime, an effort was made to draw them into the Establishment. Their former pastor, who had himself gone over, arrived at the island, prepared to use all his influence. They received him kindly, but utterly refused to accept religious ordinances at his hands. Their resolution was calmly to wait the time when their own Church could come to their aid.

At the outset, the numerous demands which came on the Free Church made it difficult to give supply to St. Kilda, but at last a catechist was sent. Again and again he was driven back from these stormy shores, and when at last he landed, he found that, notwithstanding the unanimous adherence of the people, manse and church were locked up, and no accommoda-

tion was to be had. "When he was about to leave the island the people besought him, telling him they would do anything to keep him, and reminding him that our blessed Lord Himself had not where to lay His head. That man stayed and preached the Gospel to this interesting people."*

For the next five years, however, owing to the refusal of the proprietor, no regular supply of Christian ordinances could be given, except that stated religious meetings were held by the elders—a body of devoted Christian men. Once a-year, however, an important event took place—*The Breadalbane* yacht arrived off the shore, bringing a deputation of ministers to preach and dispense the ordinances of the Church.

Mr. Angus M'Gillivray, of Dairsie, describes his visit in 1849:—"Our first view was anything but inviting.† The wind was strong and the swell heavy; the drifting mists concealed the tops of the hills, and the sea dashed wildly against the rocks. Next morning the weather moderated. . . . During the whole of our stay it was lovely—the sea calm as glass—the sky cloudless—and when at night, from the deck of the little vessel, we viewed the lofty peaks of the island standing out in bold relief from the northern twilight, and the rays of the moon dancing on the slight ripple with nothing but the ocean around us, the whole combined to form a scene which a painter might have envied."

The people, he found, were intelligent and deeply serious. The population "is at present 109,—last year it was 106; but there have been three births and no deaths." As regards social comfort, they seem equal, if not superior, to their neighbours on the Long Island. There is no want of food, and though their clothes being homespun are coarse, you never see even a child in rags—a sight too common in the Uists and Barra.

The following year—1850—he again formed one of a deputation, along with Dr. M'Lauchlan. Arriving on the 3rd July, they met with the elders, a body of "excellent and highly intelligent men, who stated that the whole community were as firmly attached as ever to the Free

* Blue Book, 1848, pp. 232, 233.

† *Witness* Newspaper, 18th August, 1849.

Church; and that from us alone holding the principles which they did, could they receive sealing ordinances." On the day of arrival one sermon was preached in the evening, and for the five following days there were sometimes two and sometimes three sermons, the Lord's Supper being dispensed on the Sabbath. Of seven who applied for the first time as young communicants, three were admitted after examination to sit down at the table. "The people were much affected during the communion services, their sobs at one time almost drowning the voice of the speaker. They have universally a deep reverence for the truth, and many of them seem to have felt its power."

After sermon on Monday the deputation explained how every means had been used to obtain permanent supply. No reflections were cast on the proprietor, to whom the people seemed grateful and attached; but without a site the Free Church could do nothing. The people declared their belief in the principles of their Church, and that nothing would shake their attachment to them. The deputation were convinced that they are intelligent Free Churchmen, and any effort at turning them aside will be utterly vain.*

This conviction at last forced itself on the proprietor, who, in 1853, handed over church and manse; when at once Mr. Duncan Kennedy was appointed resident catechist, and sailed in September along with Mr. M'Gillivray (Dairsie), who went to introduce him and dispense the sacrament. With great joy they were welcomed by the people. Sabbath was appointed for the communion, and Thursday kept as a fast day, when four children were baptised, two of them a year old. Even then, however, at the very time when a resident catechist was welcomed, the importance of this plan of ministerial supply was seen. On Thursday the wind began to rise. The captain dared not risk his vessel in the open bay of St. Kilda, lifted his anchor, and, after beating for two days in the offing, was forced to run for the coast of Sutherland, where they came to anchor in one of the heaviest gales Mr. M'Gillivray was ever out in. "We felt deeply that for a whole year the people have been deprived of the ordinance of the Supper."

* *Free Church Record*, January, 1851, p. 191.

The labours of the catechist and the visits of such deputations were much appreciated by the people; but in 1863 they urged the appointment of an ordained minister. Through the effective appeals of Dr. M'Lauchlan, convener of the Highland Committee, a sum of £500 was raised as an endowment, which, added to the other allowances, enabled the Church to send a minister, and in 1865, Mr. John Mackay was ordained by the Presbytery of Skye and Uist as missionary to St. Kilda. Thus after long delay, and privations patiently borne, the Church has been enabled to plant among her faithful adherents in St. Kilda one from whose hands they can receive all religious privileges and ordinances.*

* Blue Book Report, 1866, p. 7.

LV. Rural Districts.

We must now speak of those rural districts in the Lowlands, to which the Disruption brought the most signal blessings. The need in many cases was very great. At various points the opening of iron works and large factories had drawn together masses of workmen, under circumstances most adverse to their moral and religious welfare; while in many of our retired rural parishes moderatism had long held sway, and had brought the people into a low state of indifference and carelessness. This was the result, even where the moderate clergy were personally respected.

In many cases there was such laxity of doctrine among them, and such coldness and indifference on the subject of religion, as could not fail to have a most injurious effect on their people. In the Disruption Mss., for example, one is referred to who, for upwards of fifty years, held a prominent place in an important provincial town. "After preaching for him," the writer says, "while a very young man, the doctrine of justification by faith alone, which had been stated in the sermon, was impugned by him in private as having no foundation in God's Word, and a conversation, or rather discourse—for he was the only speaker—having arisen as to what should be a young man's studies and mode of preaching, his advice was given, with a warmth approaching to bitterness, to shun all systematic theology—to study such books as tend to enlarge and liberalise the mind, and it was closed with this sentence, too memorable to be forgotten as coming from the lips of one who had signed the Confession of Faith—'I do not mean that you should fly in the face of public prejudice, but, whatever a man preaches, he may have his own opinions.'"

Without giving more of these details, however, it may be enough to refer to the statements of Dr. Duff, the great Indian missionary, who knew the whole party well, having gone familiarly among their manses from 1835 to 1840. His reminiscences, as given in his biography by Dr. Smith,* show only too plainly the state in which he found them. They were farmers and politicians whose conversation was divided between agricultural talk and political criticism. "I do not remember," he said, "of their volunteering any remarks on the vastly higher subject of the spiritual culture of the human mind." He gives a sad picture of the intemperance and other evils which he found prevailing among them, especially in the Highlands. At the upper end of a long strath, for example, there lived a parish minister who was scarcely ever known to be sober. Another parish was a preserve of smugglers, whose rendezvous was the kirk, where the little barrels of Highland whisky were concentrated before despatch to the south. Further north, Dr. Duff found himself the inhabitant of a room in the manse which was curiously stained. On asking an explanation he was told that, as the most secure place, the attics had long been the storehouse of the smugglers of Hollands and small sacks of salt. . . . The manse had been arranged for the purpose of receiving the contraband articles, which were hoisted up by a pulley swung from a hook projecting from the window in the high-pointed gable. The plaster of the roof below was saturated with salt, which appeared in moist weather."

With such men as its representatives, religion itself must have been in danger of dying out, and in such parishes one can well understand how cordially the Disruption was welcomed by the most earnest-minded among the people. "The restraints and delicacies of the old parochial system," says Dr. Grierson of Errol,† "have been removed. The Gospel has been fully and energetically proclaimed in many a neighbourhood and many a house to which it had been practically denied."

In entering on their work, Free Church ministers in such localities had sometimes strange evidence presented to them of how much their services were needed.

* Life, ii. pp. 5-7. † Disr. Mss. xi.

Dr. G. Ramsay Davidson — Lady Glenorchy's, Edinburgh— mentions a singular welcome which he met with in the North, on entering a private house for the purpose of holding a religious service. "An old woman, a warm sympathiser with our work, accosted me—'Come awa', sir, weel a wat ye're welcome here! Aye, ye're like your work,'—looking hard at him,—'ye're no like the red-cheekit anes that we hae here aboot.'"*

Mr. Hutchison of Uddingston, afterwards of Johnstone, had gone among the iron-workers of an Ayrshire parish, and tells how on meeting one of the miners, and asking what religious denomination he belonged to, the man replied with all frankness: "I belong to the horse religion." "Well," said Mr. Hutchison, "I know a little of the different religious sects, but that is one I never heard of. What may its tenets be?" Again the man frankly answered: "Work a' week and grass i' the Sabbath." It was a state of matters calling for the most energetic efforts, and it was not long before a Free Church congregation began vigorous operations in the place.

In a rural parish in the North, a minister who had preached with much acceptance reports the impressive saying of one of the people. At the close of his service, an old man came up and said: "Sir, we were but ill prepared here for the Disruption. We were in a sad state when it occurred, but it has *given us a chance of eternal life*,"—a simple remark which came home with startling effect on the mind of the preacher.

Even before the Disruption, there were parishes in which the preaching of evangelical ministers was hailed with delight as a foretaste of better things. "I remember when I was a boy," writes Mr. Hall, farmer at Braehead of Leslie, Aberdeenshire, in a letter to Dr. G. Ramsay Davidson, "any time that you, Mr. Manson of Fyvie, or Mr. Garioch of Old Meldrum, got into the pulpit, the tremendous difference I felt. I do not mean to say that I distinguished between the Gospel truths spoken by you, and the dry moral nonsense—neither law nor Gospel—we were accustomed to; but your intense earnest manner and the grasp it took of my soul, together with the

* Disr. Mss. lviii.

remarks of my parents going home, brought me in love with the evangelical ministers, which has never for one moment cooled, and never will while reason retains her seat."

The urgent requests made for the services of such ministers pressed heavily on their energies. "When I look back," says Dr. G. Ramsay Davidson,* "on the incessant demands made on my time and strength in those days, and from so many quarters, I marvel now how I possibly could have stood it. By notes I have in my possession, I find that, on one occasion, I rode on horseback more than forty miles and preached three times the same day. Returning on Saturday from Rhynie, where I had been preaching, and doing like work in other parishes during the week, I had just remarked to my wife that this would never do—I must now give the bulk of my work to my own people. On reaching home, however, I found 'a man from Culsalmond waiting for me, entreating me to come over on the morrow, for there would be a great gathering.' I objected so far as I could, reminding he himself had a brother, a probationer—why not send him? This, he said, was out of the question: the people would be so disappointed. It was the first Sabbath of the year, and I had resolved to preach to my own people at Drumblade. Finally, we settled it that his brother should come over to preach to my people in the morning, and announce that I should preach in the afternoon. When I reached Culsalmond, I found such a concourse gathered that the grain loft intended for the service would not nearly accommodate them. There was nothing for it, therefore, but that I must preach in an open stack-yard, the snow falling the most of the time. I blessed God for that service, for many were not merely impressed at the time, but I have had reported to me by letter, years after I removed to Edinburgh, the saving fruits of that day."

As the town of Keith was the most important in Strathbogie, special attention was directed to it, and for the first celebration of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper a select number of elders were sent to officiate. "I do not remember the whole, but I know that James Hog, Esq. of Newliston, L. Craigie, Esq. of Glendoick, and Robert Bruce, Esq. of Kennet, were of the

* Disr. Mss. lviii., p. 9.

number. On one of the days I preached in the gardens adjoining. The subject was the call and conversion of Zacchæus. On describing the scene of Christ's approach and his address to Zacchæus in the tree, being in the open air, and seeing close by a tree of thick foliage, I said, naturally enough, that it might be such a tree as that to which I pointed. I observed a peculiar look and smile pass over the countenances of my hearers, which I could not understand at the time; but it turned out that one of the Old Church adherents, anxious to spy the land, had been discovered by them perched within the branches of this very tree, to which, unconscious of his presence, I had pointed, and I was told that for long afterwards he was known by the name of "Zacchæus."

"I preached the action sermon from a tent placed on the market muir outside the town, and then adjourned to hold the table services in a Secession church, kindly placed at our disposal for the day. I was assisted on that and the other days by the Rev. David Thorburn, of Leith; Mr. Davidson, of Broughty-Ferry; and Mr. Patrick Miller, afterwards of Dundee. It proved a most interesting and solemn occasion. On the Thursday before serving out tokens, every room in the house we occupied was filled with anxious men and women, many of the stoutest men in tears, confessing their past sins, and the sin especially of unworthy communicating. The place was verily a *Bochim*."

For some time after the Disruption, all that the Church could do was required to meet the spiritual wants of her own adherents; but in 1846 it was felt that some systematic effort must be made to reach the outside rural population. Twelve ministers were sent on a preaching tour among the more necessitous districts, and after the work of a month reported that, besides private pastoral visitation, 240 sermons had been preached, and with results so encouraging that next season the number of deputies was increased. It was the commencement of a work which has since continued and been prosecuted with much success.

Sometimes the reports of the deputies disclosed a sad state of religious destitution. In one of the mining districts, for

example, a population of 70,000 were found living together, among whom, it was reported, there was almost universal deadness in regard to spiritual things. "I have visited thirty or forty families in a row of houses, not three of whom went to any church. Many who once attended church elsewhere, had given it up. Their state is truly deplorable. One cannot overrate the necessity of such districts being energetically dealt with. I preached forty-five times, in churches, schoolrooms, and the open air." *

The work required peculiar qualifications in the preacher. "It must be an earnest, aggressive agency. You must carry the Gospel to them: they will not come to you for it. You must go and seek them in their own homes at meal times; in the evening, after their day's toil is over; at the forge, the furnace, the mine head, the quarry. You must continue patiently and lovingly to seek them, before you will find them for good, and lead them to God and to His house, and His holy heaven." †

It may be right to give an example of how these operations were carried on. "I began on the 14th July, and continued to the 28th of same month. During these two weeks I visited 300 houses, spending more or less time with the resident families. I had the opportunity of preaching fourteen times, twelve times out-of-doors and twice under roof. The audiences varied from 80 to 150. On one occasion there were 250 present, and on another no fewer than 320 in attendance—mostly all the class sought—viz., non-church-goers. It was deeply interesting to watch the appearance and behaviour of these people. The countenances of some of them betokened the vacancy of their minds, and plainly showed that they had long been unused to a preached Gospel. Others seemed anxious to understand the meaning of the words spoken, and looked as if they were comprehending it. A few shed tears, as if the remembrance of other days were melting their hearts. Indeed, the large majority were most attentive, and appeared to be most impressible, so that one could not but rejoice to have such a soil on which to cast the good seed of the kingdom.

* Blue Book, 1847, pp. 182, 183.

† *Home and Foreign Miss. Record*, December, 1857.

"These out-of-door meetings are becoming well understood in the neighbourhood. Soon as the preacher arrives in the evening, at the row or the square where he has been visiting during the day, some one is ready to bring out a table and a chair for his use. All at once the people begin to gather—women with their stools, workmen without their coats, little children in groups. By the time the psalm is sung, and a short prayer offered, your congregation is assembled, and arranged in all possible postures and attitudes. One seats himself on the ground, another lies on it as if he were about to swim, a third reclines on a hedge or leans on a wall, while a fourth stands bolt upright, and fixes his eyes upon you during the whole of the service. All are respectful, and usually, at the close of the exercises, some of the hearers remain to express their thanks and invite you back again. On one occasion, a few papists stood at a little distance and made a considerable noise, as if for the purpose of disturbing us. No attention was paid to the interruption, and it soon ceased. On another occasion, two drunken men placed themselves a few yards from my table and commenced to utter all sorts of discordant sounds. I was very much put out. At length, a sturdy-looking labourer in the audience removed the two disturbers to a neighbouring house, and returned to his place. All the while, the attention of the people was never lost. I mention these circumstances to show the thorough hold we get of these out-door audiences.

"The last meeting I addressed was the most interesting I ever saw. I had said to the people the evening before, that I had seen habits and practices among them about which I should like to speak to them before leaving. At the hour appointed there were upwards of 120 working men present, besides women and children.

"The evil practices discoursed upon were drunkenness, profane swearing, Sabbath breaking, neglect of public ordinances, family mismanagement, &c. All present were living in one or more of these sins. Still they listened with much apparent earnestness to a very plain condemnation of them. May God lead to a forsaking of these great evils."*

* *Missionary Record*, March, 1859.

Sometimes strange incidents served to test the earnestness both of preacher and hearers. "I preached a third time," says another, "in the open air. About an hour before the service commenced, we had a heavy thunder-shower, so that I feared we could not expect a large audience on the wet grass; but, on proceeding to the green, I found a more formidable obstacle in the way. The spot which I intended to occupy was in possession of a clown and harlequin, who were surrounded by a dense circle of gaping and wondering auditors, while peals of laughter from time to time showed that their interest was awakened, and that they were not in the fittest state of mind for listening to things belonging to their everlasting peace. I resolved, however, to make the attempt, and took my station within 100 yards from the crowd, so that the two speakers could distinctly hear the sound of each other's voices. On giving out the first psalm a slight shower fell, and strange to say, whether it was owing to one or both of these causes, the clown's circle was immediately broken up, and not only his whole audience but himself, after washing the paint from his face and slipping off his fantastic dress, came to hear the sermon, and waited patiently and listened attentively till the service was concluded. Finding that the ground was deserted, I immediately took possession of it. The number present could not be less than 300, and most of them were men. I never saw a more attentive audience, and several young men especially attracted my notice by their earnest and eager looks. It was a scene that would have warmed the coldest heart, and roused the most sluggish spirit."*

There were great benefits arising out of this work, not only to the people but to the ministers who were engaged in it. "They were all in great danger," as Dr. Main, of St. Mary's, said, "of falling into a routine perfunctory style in the discharge of duty, satisfied with doing their best without aiming directly and immediately at the conversion of the souls of men. He knew nothing so fitted to shake a man out of that style as to set him with the highway for his pulpit and the open firmament of heaven for his canopy, to deal face to face with men whom he

* *Missionary Record*, December, 1857.

had never seen before and might never see again, having but a few short days to dwell among them. He is made to feel that whatever he means to do, he must do with all his might. A man in that position is driven back to the great central truths of the glorious Gospel, and to bring these to bear directly and immediately on the consciences and hearts of men. He would cease to reason before them and begin to reason with them in the way of earnest and pleading importunity, striving to prevail with the people in regard to preaching, just as the old patriarch did in regard to praying, — for as the one hung on the Almighty and said he would not let Him go unless He blessed him, so would the other hang on the people, unwilling to let them go until they had surrendered their hearts to the Lord Jesus." *

In this way, what Mr. M'Naughtan, then of Paisley, says of Dr. Macfarlane, of Renfrew, was equally true of many of his brethren:—"The Disruption produced a most evident and, I believe, a most beneficial change in the pulpit ministrations of our beloved friend. His style of address became decidedly more popularised. From the cast of his mind, his discourses had been somewhat metaphysical in their structure. His new position, however,—the necessity of addressing men in barns, in fields, and on the mountain side,—seemed wondrously to simplify his style of thought and manner of expression; and hence, while his sermons gained largely in the qualities that rendered them more generally useful, they lost nothing of that richness of illustration, that depth of thought and fulness of exposition, that rendered them so acceptable to the scholar and the advanced Christian." †

One other example we give, from the experience of one of the deputies, Mr. Cormick, of Kirriemuir, a youthful minister whose early death was a cause of lamentation to many. He had gone, on the 16th July, 1848, on a preaching deputation, returning home on 9th August, after conducting service twenty-eight times. "So far as God gave me grace," he says, "I endeavoured, with all the tenderness and earnestness in my power,

* Blue Book, 1860, p. 78.

† Life of Rev. D. Macfarlane, D.D., p. 132.

to deal with the souls of men, in order that all who heard the Word from my mouth might be led to serious consideration of the things that pertained to their peace. What the result will be, the day will declare; but if there has been even one soul awakened and brought to Christ, I will rejoice." "I preached thirteen times in the open air. After sermon I distributed some tracts, and spoke to the people as often as I could about their souls. This gave me an opportunity of knowing something of their spiritual state." The whole district, so far as I could discover, is very barren. Oh, what a call is made to us ministers, to preach for eternity! *

The work carried on in this spirit might well be expected to be crowned with success. Instead, however, of giving any general statements on the subject, it may be best to take one or two actual examples of how the good seed took root even in the most unpromising localities.

Among the ironworkers at Muirkirk, Ayrshire, the beginnings of the movement were discouraging. After the Disruption, the parish was visited by Mr. Hutchison of Uddingston, who preached and gave addresses. A few of the people were formed into an association to see what they could do in the way of providing for ordinances; but at first the success was not great. Between the 2nd August and 25th September they had collected a sum of only 16s. 7d. Still, in the face of difficulties, the work was carried on. In December, Mr. Hutchison dispensed the communion, when about ninety persons joined. Thereafter the appearances were more promising. In March, a prayer meeting was begun; in April, three elders were ordained; in May, a site for a church was got; in July, 120 persons sat down at the communion. On the second Sabbath of April the church was opened, the collection being twenty guineas, and by the end of 1845 they had an earnest minister ordained over the congregation, with 6 elders, 8 deacons, 166 communicants, and the funds steadily increasing.†

Another example, very different in its incidents, we take from

* Blue Book, 1848, p. 237.

† Disr. Mss. iii.

a rural parish in the North. The minister had belonged to the evangelical party, and had voted with them during the conflict—a good man who had little force of character, and who failed in the day of trial.

In a remote corner of the parish there lived a godly elder, a small farmer, who kept a Sabbath school and was much respected. Along with a few of his neighbours, he left the Establishment at the Disruption, and joined the Free Church in a neighbouring congregation.

"One of the largest farms in the parish was held by a gentleman of the old school, a man of influence in the district. He was a Conservative in politics and wrote ably on that side, and being an elder in the Established Church, he was accustomed to speak much of the duty of holding up the law of the land against the Non-intrusionists. No one could have thought that ere long he himself would take a Free Church station under his wing, give it help, and ultimately become a member. A few months after the Disruption, his eldest daughter was the means of beginning the Free Church movement in the place. An old house was got which had formerly been a dwelling-house, and was then used as a carpenter's shop. Preaching was begun, the neighbouring Free Church ministers coming to officiate. The godly elder formerly referred to, along with his neighbours, at once joined, and very soon the old house assumed a new appearance. When first taken possession of, it was rough enough. One half of it formed the carpenter's shop, the other half was a byre; so that in conducting the service, the preacher took his stand beside the old fire-place, he and his audience being in one end of the house, and the cows and straw in the other, with only a wooden partition five feet high between. This was soon changed. The house was cleared, a wing was thrown out, and the whole neatly lined with wood—roof and sides. It looked like a good cabin in a large ship, holding 150 to 200 hearers, and was very comfortable.

"Among others who came to officiate was Dr. M'Lagan, Professor of Divinity in Aberdeen, and on some one remarking to him that children had been born in the old house, he quietly

said, in his earnest, beautiful way:—"Well, I hope that of it the Word may be true,—that, in the highest sense, this man, and that man was born there."

"Ere long the work began more decidedly to take shape. The services of a preacher were obtained, a Sabbath school and Bible class were begun, the number of adherents increased, and the station continued to advance.

"It had been said by the supporters of the Established Church that the whole movement depended on the two elders above referred to, and when the one was "awa' and the other was deid, the Free Kirk would come to naething." Both events occurred. The elder who first joined emigrated to Canada, where, after a long life of Christian usefulness, he died at the age of eighty-two. The latter died a few years after he joined the Free Church, and his family removed from the parish; but the station continued to develop self-sustaining powers. A new Free Church was built, and ere long a comfortable manse was added, and the congregation, with a roll of 150 members, has taken its place as a sanctioned charge of the Free Church."

It would be easy to multiply examples, showing how, in this way, from small beginnings, the congregations of the Free Church rose into importance. It is of more consequence, however, to refer to the beneficial results of such movements. As an example, we take the experience of a minister settled in 1844, who in 1864 describes the favourable change which he has witnessed. The moral tone of the people, he says, is better. Every way they stand on a higher platform than they did twenty years ago. The social immorality of the district had been advancing at a fearful rate. It is the sin of the district. There have been nineteen illegitimate births last year in the parish, with the population of 2600; but of these nineteen only two were in connection with the Free Church congregation, which numbers about 1260 of the population. For the last two or three years the above is the proportion of illegitimate births in our congregation. "The sin of drunkenness has greatly decreased in the district. I believe it is less by one-half within these twenty years. We have not a public-house in the parish,

only a good inn. Twenty years ago, there were six public-houses, besides the inn."*

It was not the mere multiplying of congregations, or adding to the number of adherents that was the great object at which the Free Church aimed—it was the conversion of sinners and the awakening of a warmer spiritual life among professing Christians who belonged to her communion.

* Blue Book, 1864, Report, p. 7.

LVI. Sabbath Observance.

One of the first subjects in connection with which the revived life of the Church showed itself was the desire for a more strict observance of the Lord's Day. Not long before the Disruption the Christian public of Scotland had been agitated by the proposal to open the railways for Sabbath traffic, and no sooner had the Free Church made good her position in the country than the question was zealously taken up. The Scottish Church had from the first in her catechisms and Confession laid down the duty of Sabbath observance more fully than any of the other Churches of the Reformation, and in practice there had been a corresponding strictness among the people. To a great extent, indeed, this had begun to be relaxed, but when the Disruption took place the hope was fondly cherished in many quarters that the event might be the means of bringing back much of the spirit and practice of better days.

It might seem indeed as if the change of 1843 had placed the Free Church at a disadvantage. Parish ministers had, or were supposed to have, a certain power of legally enforcing the duty of Sabbath observance, and this of course had passed out of their hands. It was soon felt, however, that in the Free Church they really stood on a higher platform, when they rested their appeals, not on the ground of Statute law, but on the claims of morality and religion, and on the duty which men owed to their own souls and to God. It was well known, indeed, that the most zealous friends of Sabbath observance had usually been found among the Seceders. "In our boyhood," Dr. Candlish said, "dissenter was another name for one who was peculiarly strict in his observance of the Lord's Day." This view had been confirmed at a former period by a prominent minister of the

Established Church, Dr. Irvine of Dunkeld. "I think," he says, writing in 1810, "the members of the Secession are, generally speaking, more attentive to the sanctification of the Lord's Day than others. I am afraid some of us are rather lax in this respect, and God knows I do not exempt myself from blame. As our Church is sanctioned by law, we might, if we did not fear to offend men, with more propriety call upon the magistrate to do his duty. But from one reason of expediency and another time passes on, the evil increases, morals are corrupting, piety is undermined, and society ripening for heavy chastisements."*

At the Glasgow Assembly of 1843, Sir Andrew Agnew, one of the noblest of our Christian patriots, who had unflinchingly in Parliament upheld the cause of the Sabbath, made a powerful appeal, urging ministers and people to "give life to the excellent standards" of the Church. It was the zeal of the Free Church for the Sabbath that made him love her. To Principal Fairbairn, then of Salton, the Assembly was indebted for a singularly able report on the subject, as judicious in its recommendations as it was powerful in its appeals. The Free Church, he showed, owed it to her people to make known her views for their guidance. It was due also to other Churches that she should define her position; standing conspicuous as she did in the view of Christendom, her testimony on the Sabbath question could not fail to be influential over a wide circle. Accordingly the great principles on which the duty of Sabbath observance rests were distinctly set forth, and the ground was laid for any subsequent procedure which might be necessary. Thus from the first year of our Church's separation from the State she was enabled to show her concern for the due observance of the Lord's Day.

Two years afterwards the struggle began. The railway system was on the eve of a great development, connecting us more closely with England, and bringing laxer ideas and new influences to bear on Scotland. Plausible reasons were given for running a single Sabbath train. Then, after the minds of men had become familiarised with it, a second was added, and so the evil

* Biographical Notices of Rev. W. Taylor, by the Rev. J. W. Taylor, of Flisk, p. 156.

gradually advanced, threatening to break down the sacredness of the Lord's Day as hitherto observed in Scotland. "I feel the thing in my own mind," Dr. Candlish exclaimed; "I desire to strive and pray against it." On the general population the sight of these railway trains traversing the great lines of traffic, and penetrating every district of the country, could not fail to have a most injurious effect.

In view of such dangers, Christians of different denominations combined, resolving to use all their influence to arrest the evil. At one time it seemed as if there were good prospects of success. In 1847, the directors of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway resolved to stop the trains hitherto running, and the following year the Scottish Central opened with the resolution that no Sabbath traffic should be allowed on their line.

In the Free Church Assembly these announcements were joyfully welcomed, but it soon appeared that such rejoicing was premature—the progress of adverse influences was too powerful, and railway trains were soon running where they had been stopped. The battle, however, was not given up. "It is not for the servants of God," Mr. Fairbairn said, "to despair,* but resolutely to work, doing what they can to leaven the public mind with sound principles," so that, if the Sabbath traffic cannot be altogether arrested, it may be restrained and its evils minimised.

In connection with the Post-Office, also, various efforts were made. In 1848 there were—besides letter-carriers—about 1000 persons employed in the post-offices of Scotland, and three-fourths of these had to work on Sabbaths. As if this were not enough, an attempt was made to introduce a Sabbath delivery of letters in Edinburgh all over the town; but on this occasion the friends of Sabbath observance were successful—all classes of the community rising to resist it.† In 1850, when Lord Ashley brought in a bill to abolish Sabbath work in the post-offices throughout the kingdom, the Town Councils of Glasgow and Edinburgh petitioned in favour of it—the former unanimously; while in the Edinburgh Merchant Company the same motion was carried by a majority of 60 to 13. Such

* Blue Book, 1845, p. 19.

† *Ibid.*, 1848, p. 256.

movements were not confined to any denomination, but the Free Church put forth all her influence in their support.

The whole subject excited the liveliest interest. Almost every Synod had its separate committee charged to watch over the observance of the Lord's Day in the district. An annual sermon was appointed to be preached on the same day all over the Church. Young Men's Sabbath Observance Societies were formed, the more energetic members of the congregation being thus enlisted in the cause; and from time to time the subject was brought forward in tracts and pastoral addresses distributed among the people.

In this way the Church sought to do her duty as guardian of the sacredness of the Lord's Day. The pulpit, the platform, and the press were all called into requisition. The object was to have the claims of this great cause made to take a firmer hold on the minds and consciences of the people—setting forth the principles involved, in such a way as to raise the standard of Sabbath observance. It was thus, by exercising her influence for good, and not by appealing to the law of the land, that the Free Church strove to meet the evils of railway trains and post-office work. If the minds of her own members could only be imbued with right views and feelings, and if in their own lives there was consistent Sabbath observance, they were sufficiently numerous and influential to make the power of their example to be felt in the land. Year after year the subject occupied a large share of attention at the meetings of the Assembly. It was felt that Scotland and the Free Church were on their trial. The due observance of the Lord's Day was an object the importance of which it was impossible to over-estimate. "Everything dear to us," Mr. Nixon exclaimed, "is at stake. What but the Sabbath keeps up the knowledge, worship, and fear of God in the land? What but it preserves in remembrance the finished work and glorious resurrection of Christ? What else can secure the cultivation and practice of all the personal and social virtues? What else can be so efficacious an instrument in leading the people to prepare for death, and for the services and joys of heaven? No one can exaggerate the calamities which would follow the destruction of our Scottish

Sabbath. If the Sabbath depart from us, the religion and morality of our people will depart along with it. The favour of God, which has hitherto rested so remarkably on our beloved country, will forsake it, and it will go down under His just displeasure."*

The alarm with which Dr. Chalmers viewed the encroachments of Sabbath desecration in the country was emphatically expressed: "It should be recollected," he said, "that there is not a peasantry in Europe who have been so trained by the good old habits and observances of other days to look on the Sabbath as forming an integral part of Christianity, or in whose minds the Sabbath law is so bound up and associated with the obligations of deepest sacredness. You cannot, therefore, bring down this law from its wonted authority without an utter dislocation, or rather dissolution, of the religious character of the people of Scotland, and the inevitable result on every principle of human nature must be a more rapid and ruinous degeneracy than perhaps has ever taken place in the melancholy decline of communities and nations from the virtues of their older and better times."†

Impressed by these views, the Free Church has not ceased to call on all her ministers, office-bearers, and members to maintain and defend the sacredness of the Lord's Day. Privately, in the intercourse of domestic and social life—publicly, by means of all the influence and efforts which could be brought to bear, it was their duty to maintain this great cause with which so many interests were bound up. In view of the world—in view of all the Churches—they were bound to honour the "Lord of the Sabbath,"—to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

* Blue Book, 1848, p. 260.
† *Ibid.*, 1864; Report, p. 4.

LVII. Temperance.

In close connection with Sabbath observance, the subject of Intemperance was earnestly taken up. In our larger towns especially, the desecration of the Lord's Day and the degeneracy of the masses was to a large extent due to the drinking habits of the people. Thus, in Glasgow it was ascertained, as the result of careful inquiry, that on the evening of Sabbath, 22nd November, 1846, there were 1317 places open for the sale of intoxicating drink, and many of the scenes witnessed in these dram shops and spirit shops were deplorable. The evils of drunkenness, especially in connection with Sabbath desecration, were "simply appalling."

Already the subject had been pressed on the General Assembly. In one of the earlier reports on the state of religion, intemperance was denounced as the great hindrance to the spread of the Gospel; the Free Church was reminded that her very position demanded that she should deal with this stumbling-block; she was a city set on an hill, and some testimony as regards this crying evil was due to society, and due to her own members, if she would be faithful to the cause of her great Master.*

In 1846 the subject was again brought forward, and the Assembly was reminded that the Free Church was the Church of the people—that her own members were anxiously watching her movements; and others interested in the temperance cause were looking wistfully to see whether some decided step would be taken. Accordingly, a day was appointed on which all the ministers were enjoined to preach on the subject, and a tract

* Blue Book, 1845.

warning the people against the evils of intemperance was prepared for distribution at the same time.

Again, in 1847, a still more decided course was taken. Immediately before the meeting of Assembly a conference was held of those ministers and elders who were specially interested in the cause, and it was resolved to ask the Assembly to appoint a standing committee charged with the duty of dealing with the subject. The language of the report becomes more emphatic. Intemperance stands in the way of every attempt to reclaim the irreligious. In many cases it is not unlike the demoniacal possessions common during our Lord's public ministry. Something must be done to cast out the demon of drunkenness. The Free Church is spoken of as standing between the living and the dead; "God seems in a very pointed and impressive manner to be saying to this Assembly: 'Cast ye up; cast ye up; prepare the way; take the stumbling-block out of the way of my people!'"

To give effect to these views, the Committee was strengthened, and from time to time various suggestions were offered. Temperance societies and abstinence societies had for many years been at work, and in all their best efforts we ought to bid them God speed. For the Church, however, in her Assemblies and other courts, it was necessary carefully to consider what was incumbent. Dr. Cunningham, speaking as one who had long supported the temperance cause, laid down the principle that the Church, *in her character as a Church*, should abstain from broaching schemes or plans except in so far as they had the express sanction of God's word.* It was the duty of the Church to give more attention to the subject than she had yet done, in order that she might see her way calmly, deliberately, and conscientiously, to the adoption of the principles and plans of action best fitted for dealing with the evils of prevailing intemperance.

Year after year the subject was brought forward, and different lines of action were suggested.

The Committee of the Assembly was enlarged in order to have in every Synod a sectional committee instructed to counteract

* Blue Book, 1847, p. 245.

the evils of drunkenness, each in its own district seeking at the same time to enlist the sympathies of the general public in the cause of temperance.

The House of Commons was approached with a view to having a better licensing system introduced.

The ministers of the Church were enjoined to give prominence, in their pulpit ministrations, to the Scriptural denunciations of the sin of drunkenness.

Kirk-sessions were called upon to exercise greater faithfulness in dealing with such offences, guarding the purity of the Church and her members from such vicious indulgence.

Ministers, and office-bearers, and people were solemnly admonished to give the testimony of their personal example in favour of temperance, leading lives of strict sobriety, and bringing all their influence to bear for the suppression of the enormous evils of intemperance.

Thus the Free Church, in the commencement of her work, sought to deal with this gigantic evil, which every one felt was the great obstacle in the way of all movements for the moral and religious welfare of the community. It was impossible to contemplate without the deepest pain that widespread ruin which intemperance was causing among large masses of a degraded population—its fatal influence in paralysing and making of no effect the efforts of the Church and the ministry of the Gospel. The great duty lying on all Christians to combat these evils has been steadily kept in view, and never has it been more deeply felt than it is at the present day. As time passes on, men are becoming more alive to the great urgency of the demand that the whole Church should combine in one united movement, striving, by their efforts and their prayers, to suppress the widespread evils of intemperance.

LVIII. Sabbath Schools.*

During the first year of her separate existence, amidst the toils and cares of the Disruption, the Free Church was enabled to show the deep interest which she took in Sabbath schools. When her great scheme for week-day scriptural education was set up in May, 1843, a committee was at the same time appointed with instructions to "direct special attention to Sabbath schools as one of the stated congregational means of grace." At the Glasgow Assembly in October the subject was again referred to, and in 1844, amidst the fervour which followed the memorable sermon of Dr. Charles Brown, a report was given in, and a memorial was at the same time presented from 176 male teachers in Edinburgh, calling attention to the great importance of the work.

During the following year efforts were made to obtain fuller information, and returns were received from 420 congregations, who reported that they had 916 Sabbath schools in operation, with 50,472 scholars and 4248 teachers, while in not a few cases manifest tokens of spiritual blessing were spoken of in connection with the work.

Again, in 1846, progress was reported by the Convener, Mr. Manson, who described the deep and prayerful interest awakened throughout the Church, and the large amount of earnest labour which was devoted to Sabbath schools. At that time, however, it was felt—as ever since it has been—that the work of the Committee was not so much "to undertake separate

* In this section we have been largely indebted to notes kindly furnished by Mr. William Dickson, whose labours for the last forty years deserve the grateful acknowledgments not only of the Free Church, but of every friend to the cause of Sabbath schools.

operations of their own" as to endeavour "to excite a deeper interest in the spiritual welfare of the young," keeping the subject before kirk-sessions and the higher courts of the Church.

In 1849, a change took place, when Dr. Candlish was appointed Convener, with Mr. Maitland Heriot of Ramornie as Vice-Convener. Fresh energy was thrown into the work. Presbyteries were corresponded with to stir up their interest; ministers were appointed to preach to the young; normal classes were formed for the training of inexperienced teachers; helpful books were supplied to the teachers and cheap Bibles to the scholars, and aid was given for the formation of libraries; and last, not least, the editing of the *Children's Record,* which had been begun in 1845, was in 1850 entrusted to Mr. William Dickson, whose life-long labours have been devoted in its pages to the godly upbringing of the young.

It was not long, however, till Mr. Dickson was called to take a more prominent place, having been induced in 1855, on the personal solicitation of Dr. Candlish, to undertake the Convenership of the Committee. The difficulty which hampered every movement was the want of funds, and for some time little could be done beyond issuing an occasional circular, gathering statistics, and presenting an annual report to the Assembly.

In 1860-61, a season of revival came—a time of blessing for Scotland; a marked work of grace appeared among the young, and at once the interest of the Church in her Sabbath schools received a new impulse.

One effect of this was seen in 1868, when the Assembly took the strong step of *enjoining* ministers, presbyteries, and synods to see that complete returns of the work should be sent up from year to year. This injunction took effect, and Mr. Dickson, in the report of 1869, was able to begin a practice which more than anything else has stimulated and advanced this department of the Church's work. In the annual schedule of queries, information had been asked on all points affecting the management of the schools—how the teachers were trained—the lessons prepared—prayer meetings held—missionary contributions raised—the *Children's Record* circulated—what hopeful indications there were of spiritual results, &c. &c. On these

and many other points, statements were received full of most valuable details, setting forth the methods which had been found most effective in the different localities.

But how was all this information to be turned to account? It occurred to Mr. Dickson that the most important hints and practical suggestions scattered through the various returns might be digested and classified, and embodied in the Annual Report in such a way as to awaken the interest of the Church. No sooner was this done than Mr. Kidston of Ferniegair, himself a veteran Sabbath-school teacher, on reading that first report (1869), saw the importance of putting a copy into the hands of each of the teachers who were actually engaged in the work, and at once offered to defray the needful expense. The practice thus begun has ever since been continued, and in this way every practical hint which the yearly report contains—many of them fresh and suggestive—has been brought under the notice of every teacher, all new ideas of any practical value being at once made known in every Sabbath school throughout the Church. The Report now embraces returns from more than 3000 Sabbath schools and Bible-classes, and is put into the hands of 17,000 teachers. In many cases it has been the custom, shortly after the Report has been circulated, for the minister to have a conference with his teachers for the purpose of going over the suggestions, and considering how far any of them might be utilised in their own school. The work has come to be one of no common magnitude, and the results have been in the highest degree advantageous.

It may not be without interest to record the names of those generous friends of the cause who have year by year enabled the Church to present all her Sabbath-school teachers with this small but kindly recognition of their loving labours—

1869 Mr. W. Kidston.
1870 Mr. W. Henderson, Aberdeen.
1871 Mr. John Muir, Glasgow.
1872 Mr. James Stevenson, Glasgow.
1873 Mr. P. D. Swan, Kirkcaldy.
1874 Mr. John Cowan, Beeslack.
1875 Mr. George Martin, Auchindennan.

1876 Mr. Robert Watt, Airdrie.
1877 Anonymous.
1878 Lord Kintore.
1879 Mr. James S. Napier, Glasgow.
1880 Professor Simpson, Edinburgh.
1881 Mr. James White, Overtoun.
1882 Mr. George F. Barbour, Bonskeid.

In tracing the history of the movement, as shown in the reports, and in the yearly statement of the Convener to the General Assembly, there are various respects in which a marked improvement may be observed.

Details cannot here be given, but one or two points of interest may be noted.

In the training of teachers, for example, and the preparation of lessons, a great advance has been made. At first one great cause of discouragement was the difficulty, especially in remote and small congregations, of procuring properly qualified teachers. The choice seemed to lie between engaging some who were but ill fitted for the work, and having no Sabbath school at all. Year by year that want is being rapidly remedied. Ministers are training teachers for themselves. A 'preparation meeting,' on a week evening, is very commonly held, for going over the lesson, and otherwise promoting intelligence and efficiency. It is interesting to observe that for several years past, this old complaint, so common in former reports, is not once to be found.

Another gratifying circumstance is the increase in numbers and in religious earnestness. In the report presented to the Assembly, 1882, it was shown that the Free Church had then more than 17,000 Sabbath-school teachers, and more than 200,000 young people under Bible instruction.

"That our numbers should have gone on so to increase, in the face of such influences as many of our Sabbath schools are exposed to, is a fact that may well arrest the attention of the Church, even if regarded merely as a means of feeding her congregations, and ultimately of reinforcing her office-bearers and her ministry. But, as we were impressively reminded in the Moderator's opening address, mere numbers in

a Church, or in a department of Christian work, are of themselves no necessary sign of prosperity. Important as those figures are, there is an element manifest throughout this report which cannot but be regarded as a far deeper and surer ground of encouragement. I refer to the earnest scriptural tone of the teaching which is brought to bear upon that great multitude of young people. Everywhere in that teaching, as the report so clearly shows, there is perceptible the throb, the glow, the yearning prayerfulness of soul-seeking spiritual life. For this, far more than even for our numbers, though these are this year higher than they have ever been before, have we not cause to thank God and take courage? Prayer, prayer, everywhere prayer, seems to be the watchword among our Sabbath schools.

"Much of this progress, both in practical efficiency and in earnestness of spirit, is, doubtless, to be accounted for, under God, by the great increase of interest shown in the young, not only by the Church generally, but by individual ministers. One can remember when many of our Sabbath schools were very much left to take care of themselves; when a request for an address to the children was too often met by the answer, 'Oh, children are not in my way; I don't know how to speak to children.' But now in this work, turn where we will, we find the minister at the front, encouraging, fostering, directing. Do we not in this see the precious fruit of the training through which, now almost universally, our students pass, by the Sabbath school and missionary work engaged in during their theological course?

"A student thus continuing in his prayerful care and personal dealing may find, when he leaves the Divinity Hall, and leaves his scholars, that while engaged in this humble work, he has been passing through a course of pastoral practice, and of pastoral theology, which is likely to be of use to him all the days of his life. It is after an experience something like this that many of our students now pass on to the work of the ministry. If this be so, can we wonder that it should soon show itself in our Sabbath schools? No longer kept away by a painful consciousness of inability to interest, the minister

loves to be where the children are, for he has found it to be the bit of his vineyard which, as it were, lies most sweetly to the sun. And then, what a joy he finds in sustaining and being sustained by the sympathy of his fellow-labourers! He knows the heart of a Sabbath-school teacher, for he has been a Sabbath-school teacher himself." *

Better accommodation for our Sabbath schools is another matter about which, in recent years, some stir has been made. The remonstrance was not without reason, and good has come of it. While much consideration, and rightly, was given to the comfort of a church, almost any place, however inconvenient, was thought good enough for a Sabbath school. In 1876, the case was thus put before the Assembly. "Many, especially of our missionary schools, are held in places utterly unfit for the purpose; ill-lighted, ill-ventilated, depressing alike to teachers and to scholars. A case was discovered by the Assembly's evangelistic deputies last autumn, where a Free Church elder had kept a Sabbath school for thirty years with no better accommodation than a cave in a rock on the shores of Argyleshire. Things ought not so to be. If the teacher gives his love and his labour, surely the Church should see to his proper accommodation. The Sabbath school, like the visible Church, has a body as well as a soul. It is well for us to say to it, 'Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled;' but if, notwithstanding, we give them not those things which are needful for the body, what doth it profit? Let kirk-sessions, in their care for the schools, see that the best available accommodation be provided; and let deacons' courts see that rents and all expenses are paid, and not left to come out of the pocket of the teacher, as hitherto has sometimes been the case. When a new church is built, let the Assembly's Building Committee, and all contributors, stipulate that there shall be a fit place for the Sabbath school. We don't turn our cellars into nurseries; are we not glad rather when we can give up the brightest room in the house for the little ones? Shall the Church do less for her children?" †

* Blue Book, 1882, p. 193.

† *Ibid.*, 1876, p. 264.

There is no feature in this whole movement, however, more remarkable than the care taken to foster among the young an interest in the cause of Missions. Even in the first report, given in by Mr. Lewis at the Assembly of 1844, this was put in the foreground. Every Sabbath school, he said, ought to be in fact a juvenile missionary association. If they hoped to realise the character of a Missionary Church, it would be by beginning at the beginning—infusing with the first breath of spiritual life into our children the missionary spirit. It might surprise those not in the habit of reflecting on what Dr. Chalmers called 'the power of littles' to learn that the children had raised upwards of £500 for the Orphan Refuge in India, besides their contributions to other missionary schemes.* The keynote thus early struck has been faithfully followed up. By facts and incidents conveyed through the *Children's Record*, it has been sought to make the young familiar with our missions and missionaries, and thereby to foster an intelligent interest in the whole mission work of the Church. As regards juvenile contributions, the result has been remarkable. The amount for all missionary purposes raised during the year by the children, and reported for 1881-82, was £4806, 0s. 2d., being nearly £300 in excess of the previous year. This is inclusive of a "New Year Offering" of £648, 2s. 4d. for Medical Mission Buildings at Madras. For these "New Year Offerings" on behalf of special objects, the contributions of the young people, in response to appeals made to them through the *Children's Record* during the thirteen years ending 1882, have been as follows :—

1867.	Waggons for Nagpore,	£315
1870.	School for Lovedale, South Africa,	312
1871.	Mr. Narayan Sheshadri's "Bethel" at Jalna,	334
1873.	Jewish Mission Girls' School at Constantinople,	633
1874.	Iron Mission Church, Baillieston,	670
1875.	Hospital for Santal Mission,	840
1876.	Waggons for Africa,	1005
1877.	School and Dispensary for Lebanon,	750
1878.	Children's Books for Waldenses and Bohemia,	800
1879.	Steamer and Cloth for Livingstonia,	532

* Blue Book, 1844, p. 171.

1880. Home and Printing Press for Poona Orphans, .	£600
1881. New "Floating Bethel" for Genoa, . .	725
1882. Medical Mission Hall, Madras, . . .	648
	£8164

"Besides the great material help thus supplied to these various missions, and to the comfort of the missionaries, can it be doubted that the collecting of that £8000 must have had an important educational effect upon those who collected it? Is it nought that the children of the Free Church should be remembered, as they very surely are, with gratitude and affection by native communities in so many distant parts of the mission field and of the world?" *

Up to 1869, when the statistics began to be annually printed, it is difficult to ascertain correctly the amount of the juvenile contributions. But for the fifteen years from 1869 to 1883, as shown in the yearly reports, the givings of the children of the Church, for all missionary purposes, have together amounted to considerably more than *fifty-two thousand eight hundred pounds.*

Looking back now on those forty years of Sabbath-school work in the Free Church, no one can fail to observe the advance which has been made, and the different position in which the whole subject now stands. It has been the aim of the Committee to have these schools of the Church incorporated as an integral part of her regular ecclesiastical organisation, and this has now been practically accomplished. All over the Church the cause is being cared for and fostered, and returns sent in from kirk-sessions, presbyteries, and synods. These returns form the basis of the yearly reports, in which the work, in all its breadth and importance, is from year to year presented before the view of the General Assembly.

And other significant signs may be seen of the ever-deepening interest which is taken in the young. In the stated pulpit services of the Sabbath, for example, there is now usually a portion for the children. And at family worship on Sabbath mornings, a practice, recommended by the General Assembly (1868), is very commonly observed in households belonging to the Free

* Blue Book, 1881, p. 195.

Church — prayer is specially offered on behalf of Sabbath schools.

But of all these tokens of encouragement, the most remarkable was the appointment by the General Assembly, 1882, of a particular day,—Sabbath, the 5th of November,—in which the whole public services throughout the congregations of the Church should have reference to the young. Never before had such an appointment been made; but more remarkable and more cheering still was the heartiness with which it was taken up, and the impressiveness and success, for the most part, of the services which were held. As years pass on, the interest grows, and more than ever the Church seems to be taking to heart the words of our Lord, "Feed my lambs."

LIX. Unions.

It is remarkable how the Disruption, while directly causing division, was yet the means of healing former breaches by gathering into one various divided sections of Scottish Presbyterianism. Four years before the separation, one of the branches of the Original Secession—the Old Light Burgher Synod—had been drawn within the bosom of the Establishment, avowedly on the ground that the Evangelical party were in the ascendant and had brought the Church into the position to which their forefathers looked forward.

Another union of the same kind took place in 1852, when the United Original Seceders—the body to which Dr. M'Crie and his friends belonged—cast in their lot with the Free Church, adding upwards of thirty congregations to the roll. Previously, at the Glasgow Assembly in 1843, when they appeared with other Churches to express their sympathy with the position of the Free Church, Dr. Candlish suggested that the address which they presented should be separated from the others—the principles on which it proceeded were in such "perfect practical agreement" with those of the Free Church as to "point to an incorporating union."

Negotiations were accordingly entered on; but time was required before a complete understanding could be come to, and it was not till Tuesday, the 1st of June, 1852, that the union was actually carried out. The motion on that occasion was made by Dr. Candlish and seconded by Sir George Sinclair in language of peculiar warmth and fervour. "I cannot express to you," Sir George remarked, "the sentiment of joy with which I contemplate this event. I estimate the importance of the venerable body which has united itself to ours by their excel-

lence and not by their numbers. In the days of ancient warfare, any general would have hailed with much more satisfaction the junction to his ranks of 300 Spartans with Leonidas at their head than if Mardonius had presented himself with 100,000 followers." Alluding to the dead, he continued, "I cannot mention without feelings of deep emotion the venerated name of M'Crie, a man gifted with a most powerful intellect, and at the same time with the most profound humility, possessing the most undaunted courage and the most unostentatious simplicity. Never was there a man so qualified to delineate for the admiration and example of every subsequent generation of Scotchmen, the virtues, the sufferings, the trials, and triumphs of our ancestors."*

Dr. M'Crie, the younger, in reply, declared: "For myself I shall only say that much as I respect the memory of the Erskines, the Fishers, and Moncreiff's of the Secession, still deeper is my veneration for the worthies who have adorned the history of the Church of Scotland. And I confess that my heart rejoices—I may say leaps for joy—in the act of returning as I do to the Church of Knox, and Melville, and Henderson—the Church of Thomas Boston, of Andrew Thomson, and of Thomas Chalmers."† Mr. White of Haddington reciprocated the sentiments of Dr. Candlish, that this union was matter of rejoicing because it was a union in the truth. For himself, personally, he did not rejoice because he was a Seceder—"No, I have ever been far more in heart and soul a Church of Scotland man than ever I was a Secession man. I became a Seceder just because I was a Church of Scotland man, and I cease to be a Seceder just because I can be a Church of Scotland man, out and out, within the Church of Scotland. I believe that Knox, and Melville, and Henderson, if they had lived in the days of the Erskines, would have become Seceders, and I believe that Ebenezer Erskine and W. Wilson, if they had been living, would this evening have ceased to be Seceders by joining the Free Church of Scotland."

Thus heartily did the brethren express the feelings with

* Blue Book, 1852, Appendix, pp. 22, 23.

† *Ibid.*, p. 25.

which they took their place within the Assembly, and with no less warmth did the Assembly respond. "I do rejoice," said Dr. Duff, "with exceeding great joy, that by their vitalising accession, the Free Church, which we and they maintain to be the ancient, veritable, reformed, covenanted Church of Scotland —the Church founded by Scotland's dauntless reformers, fed and nourished by Scotland's holiest confessors, and cemented by the blood of Scotland's noble army of martyrs—may be still further consolidated and perpetuated to the ages of latest posterity." *

Again, in 1876, there took place a union with the Reformed Presbyterian, popularly known as the Cameronian, Church. Before the Revolution of 1688, they were part of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and were the strength of that body during the days of persecution. Their great principle was not only a Free Church in a free State, but a Christian Church in a Christian State, and the covenants by which Scotland had bound herself to this principle they held to be still in force. When the Established Church, therefore, accepted the Revolution Settlement, it seemed to them an unfaithful compromise, and they stood out on the old ground on which the whole Church of the Second Reformation had previously stood.

The accession of such a body was thus an event well fitted to excite the deepest interest among all parties. From the first they had been strongly attached to the Free Church, expressing at the Glasgow Assembly (1843) their admiration of what she had done in separating from the Establishment. "In our opinion no event of equal importance to the interests of religion has occurred in our land for a century and a-half." It will "constitute a memorable epoch in the page of history." †

Such sentiments might well have seemed to pave the way for a speedy incorporating union, but public bodies move slowly, and there were strong reasons why the Reformed Presbyterians, looking to the past, should cling tenaciously to their separate existence.

They had, indeed, a very noble history—their ancestors were

* Blue Book, 1852, pp. 27-33.

† *Ibid.*, Glasgow Assembly, p. 43.

the Covenanters on whom had fallen the sufferings of martyrdom during that long persecution, when with unflinching faith they struggled for the civil and religious liberties of Scotland, and kept the banner flying for Christ's crown and covenant. No body of Scotchmen had done so much to bring about the Revolution, and when it seemed to be imperilled by the battle of Killiecrankie, it was they, with the gallant Colonel Cleland at their head, who volunteered in its defence, and turned the tide of war in the valley of Dunkeld.

After all this the Revolution Settlement excluded them, as they believed, from the Established Church, unless they were prepared to sacrifice those very principles, adherence to which had carried them through the struggle. It was a poor reward, but with unflinching steadfastness they faced their new position. Patient martyrs in the days of persecution, gallant soldiers on the field of battle, they now consented to be left outside,—actually for a time they were sheep without a shepherd, till they formed themselves into a regularly constituted Church. Then came long years of comparative obscurity, in which their flocks stood by their principles and by each other with a tenacity worthy of the highest admiration. Their views in regard to the civil magistracy might seem to many to be extreme—but their ministers were, in many cases, men of talent, and their members, as a rule, were known for the consistency and godliness of their lives. No branch of the Presbyterian Church enjoyed a larger measure of public respect.

Of the negotiations which preceded the union it is not needful that we should speak. Ultimately, in 1876, when they were brought to a successful issue, it was found that among the thirty-eight ministers who belonged to the Synod there was all but complete unanimity. The 25th of May, 1876, was a day to be remembered, when that Synod, as a body, entered the hall of the Free Assembly and the union was consummated, the two Churches taking their seats side by side as brethren in Christ. The scene was one which called up solemn memories of Cargill, and Cameron, and Guthrie, carrying the mind away to the days of Henderson, and Melville, and Knox—memories associated with the banner so long upheld by the strong arms of our

covenanting fathers, "of which," Dr. Goold remarked at the time, "no ridicule will ever make us ashamed, as no persecution ever made us relax our grasp—riddled with the shot of Claverhouse and Dalzell—consecrated with the blood of martyrdom, and inscribed with the imperishable legend 'For Christ's Crown and Covenant.'"

The event was not only welcomed by the Free Church, but was felt to be an important testimony to her position in connection with the religious history of Scotland. In 1839, the Original Burgher branch of the Secession Church had joined the Church of Scotland when the evangelical party had established their ascendency. In 1852, the Anti-Burgher branch had cast in their lot with the Free Church—these two bringing with them the testimony of the Erskines, and Fishers, and M'Cries. And now the Reformed Presbyterians came to add the suffrages of covenanting times. All along, the Free Church felt that they were contending for the same great cause for which our godly forefathers struggled and died, and here were the stricter Presbyterian Churches in Scotland—the men who had inherited most fully and held most firmly the principles of former days —not only uniting to testify that the Free Church was the modern representative of former witnesses for God's truth, but actually finding their own proper home and resting place in the bosom of that Church. Once and again, and yet a third time, the most strict and uncompromising of the old Presbyterian communions joined the Free Church, and when they were seen identifying their cause with hers, the testimony which they bore to her position was in the highest degree important in the view of all thoughtful men. She might well thank God and take courage.

LX. The Larger Cities.—Home Mission Work.

The larger cities of Scotland, with their masses of neglected and degraded inhabitants, have all along been an object of special concern to the Free Church. A stranger passing along the more conspicuous streets of Edinburgh and Glasgow, admiring the architecture of their crescents and terraces, could have little idea of the dark closes and "wynds" where so many of the people are sunk in poverty, and living amidst physical and moral debasement, all the more painful because in so many cases they had formerly known the outward decencies of a Christian life. It was to these classes that the Free Church from the outset specially directed her efforts.

In some unfriendly quarters it had been loudly proclaimed that such localities would be forsaken when the Establishment was left. The Free Church having no endowments, would have to go where money was to be had, and must confine her attention to those well-to-do people who could afford to pay for her services.

Men ought to have known Dr. Chalmers and his fellow-labourers better. For many a year the elevation of these sunken masses had been to him an object of anxious solicitude, and with this feeling the Free Church fully sympathised. Into these poor localities where the population was densest, and the leaven of sin and sorrow most active, they sought to enter, striving in some measure to follow the steps of Him who went amongst publicans and sinners. Assuredly, it was not to gather money, or seek self-aggrandisement, that such obscure districts were chosen. It was that in the strongholds of poverty and sin they might reclaim some of the lost sheep, and gather from

the off-scourings of the people immortal souls, who might shine one day as jewels in the Saviour's crown.

In this, as in so many departments, it was Dr. Chalmers who led the way. Hardly had he seen the Free Church well afloat when casting aside everything but his professorship, disentangling himself from convenerships and every other kind of Church occupation, he concentrated all his energies on his loved Home Mission work. Within a year of the Disruption he was already looking round to see where lay the worst district in the city of Edinburgh, in order that he might make it the object of his care. It was on the West Port that he fixed his choice.

The place some years before had become infamous as the scene of a whole series of cold-blooded secret murders, the discovery of which, with their circumstances and objects, had sent a thrill of horror through the community. The population of the district was two thousand, of whom fifteen hundred had no connection with any Christian Church, living chiefly in filthy closes where drunkenness and vice prevailed. There were four hundred and fifty children of school age, two hundred and ninety of whom were growing up untaught and utterly neglected.

Here was a district wholly to the mind of the great philanthropist, on the reclaiming of which he could fairly set his heart. The effort, he confessed, was too great for his "declining strength *and means*," but gladly would he make it the concluding act of his public life, if he could only succeed in showing how such a locality could be rescued from the moral wilderness, holding it up as an example in the view of all Christian churches, and leaving it behind him as "a model and normal specimen," "a made-out experience" of successful territorial work.

It was in July, 1844, that the ground was first broken. Gathering around him a band of Christian friends, Dr. Chalmers mapped out the West Port into twenty districts, assigning one to each visitor, with instructions to go round the families every week, reading the Bible if they got opportunity, conversing with the people, and showing a kindly interest in them and their children. Once a-week, also, they were to meet on Saturday

evening to report progress, and pray over the work; and in these meetings he was himself to preside, infusing into them his own ardent zeal.

It must be confessed that at first the progress was not encouraging. At the end of January a tan loft was opened for public worship, the first sermon being preached by Dr. Chalmers in the forenoon. "We were present," * says Dr Hanna, "in the evening of that day, when the city missionary officiated, and when we looked round and saw that the whole fruit of the advices, and requests, and entreaties which for many previous weeks had been brought to bear upon all the families by the visitors, was the presence of about a dozen adults, and these mostly old women, we confess to strong misgivings as to the result." There was a maxim, however, which was often on the lips of Dr. Chalmers, that prayer and pains with faith could do anything, and it was in this spirit they were resolved to go forward.

Accordingly much prayer was offered. Page after page of the secret diary of Dr. Chalmers, as Dr. Hanna states, bears witness to the deep and devout earnestness of these supplications. "There may have been other works of his hands, upon which a larger amount of labour was bestowed—but there was none over which so many prayers were offered."

Along with this there was much strenuous effort. By a most fortunate selection Mr. Tasker was chosen to take charge of the station, and many an urgent appeal was addressed to him and other friends by Dr. Chalmers. "We are not worthy of having entered on the experiment if not capable of persevering with it, under the discouragement of many alternations, and for a time—if so it pleased God to exercise our faith and patience—of reverses." †

Fostered in this way, it was not long till the promise of abundant fruit began to appear. The meetings increased, a church seated for 520 hearers was built, and largely attended—the great bulk of the communicants being from the closes of the West Port. Writing to his friend, Mr. Lennox of New York, Dr. Chalmers expressed the gratification which he felt. "I wish

* Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers, iv. p. 404.
† *Ibid.*, iv. 408.

to communicate what to me is the most joyful event of my life. I have been intent for thirty years on the completion of a territorial experiment, and I have now to bless God for the consummation of it." To Mr. Tasker he said: "I have got now the desire of my heart—the church is finished, and the schools are flourishing, our ecclesiastical machinery is about complete, and all in good working order. God has indeed heard my prayer, and I could now lay down my head in peace and die."

And even such was the result. Hardly had the new church at West Port been opened, when all Scotland was called to mourn the death of the noblest of her sons. But how thoroughly that last part of his work had been done was seen from the fact that not even the removal of his guiding hand retarded its progress. Year by year increasingly the congregation prospered. The place became too strait, the accommodation was enlarged, and the whole expense of religious ordinances was more than met by the freewill offerings of the people themselves. There was not a child of all the families who was not at school. The whole aspect of the West Port was changed, and when men saw such a result wrought out within a time so brief and at a cost so small, many felt that the appeal was irresistible to go and do likewise.

The Presbytery of Edinburgh more especially could not remain passive. Dr. Candlish and his people had been beforehand with the Presbytery, the congregation of Free St. George's having already taken up the work at Fountainbridge. But the Court resolved that some systematic effort must be made. Every congregation in the city was formally called upon to consider the duty of selecting some destitute locality as a field for Home Mission operations, and ere long a whole array of these territorial movements was in progress. Besides Fountainbridge on the Canal, and the West Port at the one end of the Grassmarket, another church—that of Cowgatehead—was planted at the other. Further to the east, Dr. Charles Brown and his people took up the Cowgate. Dr. Guthrie and Dr. Hanna, in St. John's, selected the Pleasance. There was Moray Church, and Holyrood, and various others carried on, till the more densely peopled districts of the city were penetrated by a whole

chain of territorial charges.* Wherever poverty and wretchedness were most to be found, there the Free Church was seen planting her churches, and bringing all her energies to bear on the evangelisation of the masses. How the blessing of God rested on many of these efforts was well known both by the Church and the general public. Fountainbridge, for example, under the remarkable pastorate of Mr. Wilson, ere long overflowed and gave off a separate congregation for Barclay Church; and again, under the no less successful ministry of Mr. Morgan, it has given off a second swarm to form the Viewforth Church, thus establishing two of the largest and most flourishing congregations in Edinburgh.

But after all, it was in Glasgow that the Home Mission efforts of the Free Church produced the most striking results. The enormous increase of the population in that city had brought about a state of matters with which it was difficult to deal. The church extension movement, which took place before the Disruption, had done much, but there still remained 80,000 people with no church connection, living in practical heathenism. The Free Churchmen in Glasgow, with the example of Dr. Chalmers before their eyes, could not possibly allow such a state of matters to continue. Dr. Lorimer tells how his congregation, avowedly following the West Port movement, selected a district—Dempster Street and its neighbourhood—which popularly bore the name of "Botany Bay," and in which the carelessness and the obduracy of the people were appalling. Into that locality they threw a band of office-bearers and Christian workers, and Dr. Lorimer, writing in 1846, describes the prospects of the undertaking as full of promise.†

Of all these efforts, however, the most conspicuous was that begun in the Tron Church Parish by Dr. Buchanan and his congregation. Mr. M'Coll was chosen to take charge of the movement, and proved himself fitted for the work in a very

* It should be stated that the movement at Cowgate Head was begun by Lady Effingham, and the church built by the trustees of William Whyte, Esq., bookseller; Holyrood was begun by St. Luke's Congregation, and largely aided by the Duchess of Gordon.

† Disr. Mss. i.

high degree. The district of the parish where his operations began was known as "The Wynds," covering a space of twelve acres, and inhabited by a dense population of about 12,000 souls. Under the guidance of a friend who had previously done good work in the place, Mr. M'Coll tells how he paid his first visit to an upper room, which was reached by climbing half-a-dozen dirty crazy stairs, where, from the upper window, they could see the old crow-stepped gables and broken chimney-pots over many a roof. The work of visiting he found was by no means pleasant to the eyes, or to any of the senses. In the hot summer days, among ill-ventilated rooms and badly-drained closes, it required considerable courage to face such well-defended walls; and often by the bedside of the dying, it was painful to see the coverlet crowded with flies, and not a hand to keep from the clammy face the tormentors that would admit of no repose. The cases of typhus and cholera were the most trying, especially when, entering some low cellar, you were met by the salvo of an infected atmosphere, well rammed home, with no possible escape but by the way you entered.

But worse than all else was the moral condition of the people —there were "so many dark devious dens to which the thief and the harlot, like beasts of prey, could retire, and from which, as night came down, they might creep forth and seek their prey. The sober, industrious inhabitants left the place—whisky-shops multiplied—there were the wild orgies of Saturday night, and the saturnalia of the Glasgow Fair; and in the midst of these evil influences, 'The Wynds' were getting worse and worse every year. I shall never forget my first impressions of the houses I visited, and the people gathered out to be taught, nor the remark with which I was greeted among my first efforts, by an experienced Sabbath-school teacher: 'Ah, sir, its awfu' work this. The folk here are like rotten wood—they winna hold the nail.'" Into the midst of this district, with all its difficulties, Mr. M'Coll cast himself, and went to work with a zeal and tact which soon led to very remarkable results.

Among the methods he pursued, and which we cannot here describe in detail, there was one thing deserving special notice —the way in which he got all hands to work.

At first it was his own personal labour that was required; and certainly it was given with unsparing zeal—"I often visited thirty or forty houses in a day,—now standing beside a woman with her washing-tub, speaking about the things of her peace until she would dry the soap-suds from her arms and then from her eyes; and then sitting beside the tailor and shoemaker—urging them to seek the Lord." *

Labouring on thus with all his might, it was not long till a band of devoted Christian workers gathered round him. They undertook to visit the district each Sabbath between sermons, leaving tracts in the houses, and inviting people to Church in the afternoon. Forty visitors were thus employed; and before the end of the first year, the effect of their work began to be seen.

Still more remarkable was the movement that followed. "It was in the beginning of our second winter that another agency, of prime importance to us, was started—our Sabbath evening services for people in working clothes. Some of the visitors came to me, headed by my friend David Cunninghame, who was one of the first few sent to us. 'We cannot longer,' they said, 'get people to follow us into church in the afternoon, because, they say, we are all now so well dressed?' 'What do you propose then?' I asked. 'Could we have a short service in the evening specially for this class?' I at once answered that I would make a beginning. I would preach again in the evening, if they would come out in their working clothes, so as to induce others to do the same. The tame elephants, as in jungle hunting, might thus bring in the wild. This was at once agreed to, and about thirty visitors—the young women putting aside their nice dresses and bonnets, and the men their broadcloth, and coming out in the dress which they wore at work, went round and gathered the first evening thirty others. We now instituted what we called our Night Brigade, a band of male visitors armed with bull's-eye lanterns, who penetrated the dark closes and stairs a little before the service began to get promises fulfilled. The second evening we had ninety present, the third about a hundred and fifty, and soon we had

* Work in the Wynds, page 34 By the Rev. D. M'Coll.

the church half-filled, sometimes crowded, when some of the visitors would peep into the vestry before service, and say, 'We have swept the closes clean to-night.'

"From the very first this service was to me the most impressive I had then seen. It was very short, never exceeding an hour or an hour and a-quarter, and conducted with the same attention to details as the other church services. But the audience affected me profoundly. They taught me how to preach. There they sat, many of them in rags, some of them unwashed, some brought in from their firesides as they sat after their Saturday night's dissipation. Many had never in their life been within a church door, many had not been for ten or twenty years. And there they sat, as I stood up to preach, looking into my eyes with eager search as if for light, waiting to know if I really had any good news for them. They seemed to say: 'We have come for once at anyrate within your reach, and we shall listen to-night till you're done. Say your best. Do your utmost. We are dead hopeless creatures. We know we're lost, you need not tell us that. We believe in hell; we have been there. But is there salvation for us? Can you do anything to save us? For God's sake try!' And I did try. But for a little I lost sight of them in tears. For my words were broken and mingled with sobs. But as it happened, my emotion moved them. Some of them were softened, and their hearts took away impressions from the truth. I told them in the end that I had been preaching Christ, and now I preached myself, their servant, for His sake. I offered them the church; I offered them myself as their minister; I offered them, if they would rise and follow the Lord with us, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and such help as was promised us of God. We spoke to them as they came in and went out, and tried to make them feel at home. We had in those days no Dorcas Society. We had to say like Peter and John, 'Silver and gold we have none, but what we have give we; in the name of Jesus Christ, rise up and walk.' Soon we saw those who had lain for years at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, mere lame beggars from their birth, rise up as we said, 'Look on us,' and especially when we 'took them by the hand' and helped them to rise. They were

seen going into the temple, leaping and praising God. How soon, when they sat at the feet of Jesus, they were 'clothed and in their right mind.'"

The Church now began to fill more rapidly, and then it was when the congregation began to overflow that we reach the point of deepest interest. A new aggressive movement was resolved on, the locality selected being the Bridgegate, noted for its rioting, the very centre of the popish population of Glasgow. A church was built; 448 members and 6 elders, with Mr. M'Coll at their head, moved off to commence work in the new locality, and there it was not long till the same success attended his efforts.

But the most wonderful thing was that the Wynd Church, where 250 of the old members had remained, soon began once more to fill under the pastorate of Mr. Howie. Ere long it began a second time to overflow, and a new disjunction to take place. A site was got in Charlotte Street. Trinity Church was built, to which 400 members followed Mr. Howie, and within three years the numbers on the communion roll had risen to 1100.

Still, the old Wynd Church held on its way. The Rev. J. Wells had succeeded Mr. Howie, and soon found the place again too strait. The process had to be repeated, the old hive sending off yet another swarm. This time a site was got in the Barony Parish at an expense of £3000, and a handsome church erected at a cost of £7000 additional, the money being contributed chiefly through the munificence of two of Glasgow's most generous merchant princes, the Messrs. Burns, son and grandson of the well-known Dr. Burns, who for sixty years had been minister of the Barony Parish. The new church was associated with his name, and intended to keep alive his memory.

Looking to all this, Dr. Buchanan once remarked that only they who had known the Wynds in their former state could appreciate the change. Many a day, as minister of the parish, he had walked sadly and sorrowfully up and down those closes, and climbed dark and filthy stairs, where it was difficult to get any one to listen, and where it seemed to be all sowing and no reaping; but now, what a difference! He had gone into these

lanes, in one of these churches, on a week-day evening, when he could hardly get to the church door for the crowd that was gathered round it. "That Wynd district, that was the opprobrium of the city, to which strangers, curious in such sights, were taken that they might see to what depths it was possible for human beings to sink—that very district had become within a few years literally a centre of moral and religious influence in the great city of Glasgow."*

While all this was going on, other congregations were not idle. Within a very few years twenty additional Free Church congregations were formed in the Presbytery of Glasgow. The whole narrative of work connected with the Wynd Church is one to which it would be difficult to find a parallel in the history of Christian effort. But what gives it tenfold interest is the earnest spirituality which pervaded the whole operations. It was the winning of souls that was the one grand object in view. If adherents were gained for the Free Church, and churches were built and congregations formed, these were secondary results. Here was a degraded population perishing in wretchedness and vice, and the one grand question was how to reclaim those backsliders, and to rescue those of our own flesh and blood who were ready to perish.

It is impossible for us here to attempt any sketch of what was done in Dundee, Aberdeen, and other towns, but these two examples—of the West Port in Edinburgh, and the Wynd Church in Glasgow—will enable the reader to understand how such territorial work was carried on. Though the results were not in all cases equally striking, yet over the whole field there were tokens of blessing for which men might well thank God. The Church, Dr. Roxburgh declared, "was not sufficiently aware how much of that measure of Christian usefulness to which she had attained was due to these territorial operations. He could name twenty-six of these stations, which within the last very few years had risen into congregations, some of them most vigorous and flourishing—some of them shining as centres of light in the midst of the darkest and neediest districts."† It was a noble thing to listen to him when,

* Blue Book, 1861, p. 107. † Blue Book, 1859, p. 203.

as Convener of Home Mission Committee, year after year he laid before the Assembly a review of this work, thrilling them with his appeals and making men feel how truly this was the proper work of the Christian Church. All too soon his failing strength forced him to retire from his post, yet not less did the work continue to prosper, and Dr. Wilson, his successor, was able to say: "We are adding year after year to the number of such missions, and year by year God is showing how wide and effectual is the door open to us for obtaining access to the masses of the population crowding the lanes and closes of our large cities. And if I may venture to say it, nowhere in the field of missions at home or abroad in connection with the agency of the Free Church has such an abundant blessing been poured out as in connection with these territorial missions." *

* Blue Book, 1865, p. 79.

LXI. Results of the Disruption.—Spiritual Fruit.

It was the great hope of the Free Church that the Disruption, with all its trials, would yet prove a blessing by awakening men to a sense of the reality and power of vital religion. Such an event could not fail to have a powerful effect for good or evil. All Scotland had been shaken—every circle of society had been agitated; and now, when we look back, it may well be asked, How far did the cause of religion gain or lose? Various statements bearing on this occur in the Disruption Records.

The remark of a working man—"a pious weaver, a student of his Bible"—is mentioned by Dr. Burns of Kilsyth. For some time he had been expecting what took place. "The Church," he said, "including the different denominations," had become "very dormant," and much in need of being stirred up. The Lord behoved to touch the mainspring. He had begun at the house of God—the ministers.

Cases have occurred, says Mr. Innes of Deskford, Banffshire, in which individuals have traced their first serious impressions to the Disruption, with its accompaniments—but especially where individuals, well disposed before that event, have had their ideas of the reality and importance of vital religion greatly enlarged and strengthened.*

Such instances confirm the remark of Dr. Burns, that the Disruption, as "a practical demonstration of the power of the truth," was "better than a new treatise on the evidences of Christianity."

At Larbert, when Dr. John Bonar, as all men expected, proved true to his colours, and took part in the Disruption, the effect on the parish and throughout the district generally was to

* Disr. Mss. xv.

beget and spread abroad a conviction as to the power of conscience and the practical force of truth which itself was, as the present writer knows, and has good reason to say, a powerful means of grace. They had had in that parish some experience of forced settlements and of the coldness of a Moderate ministry, and they questioned whether the ministry could be anything but Moderate and time-serving. Many of them did so; yet all, with beautiful and most natural inconsistency, thought better of their own minister, and it came to them like a pleasing proof of the correctness of their judgment, whilst it was an evidence also that religion is real and has power, that he and many more were valiant and true in the hour of trial. We happen to know that a thought and course of reasoning of this kind had very strong and blessed influence in Larbert; and we believe also that in many other parts of the land as well, Disruption bravery and consistency were in this way made a blessing. Men saw therein the power of religious truth and the living reality of evangelical piety, and the sight availed for bringing them "under the powers of the world to come."*

Still more were these impressions confirmed by the course of Christian usefulness to which the Church devoted herself. In December, 1862, nearly twenty years after the Disruption, a member of Parliament, representing one of the largest counties in Scotland, wrote to a minister of the Free Church: "At one time I thought that you and the able men with whom you acted were wrong. . . . But no impartial observer can look round and see the number of new churches and new schools which have been built, and the increased number of ministers and teachers, without frankly admitting that the formation of the Free Church has been a great blessing to Scotland."†

How the Disruption roused the Church in her own proper sphere was obvious even to strangers from a distance. D'Aubigné, for example, is struck by the life and earnestness apparent in the very aspect of the General Assembly:—"The hall at Canonmills is low, but under its bare rafters and rude beams there was assembled an enthusiastic auditory,

* Disr. Mss. lxiv.

† Blue Book, lxiii. p. 7.

filling the vast area. A Scottish assembly is no gathering of cold, impassive listeners, as those in Switzerland and the Continent too often are; it is a living body of extreme sensibility, ready to respond to every touch. These multitudes feel an interest in the discussions affecting the cause of God, and the religious interests of mankind, more keen than the world does in political debates. Neither in the Houses of Parliament in London, nor in the Palais Bourbon in Paris, is to be seen anything like what is witnessed in the Canonmills at Edinburgh." The world "sneers at the Church; but it is right to show that she can feel more enthusiasm for the cause of Christ than the world does for political and material interests." *

In country districts even the most remote much of the same earnestness was manifest—conspicuously in the Highlands, as we have seen; but in many a Lowland parish also men were thirsting for the Word. Thus, in the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, with its seventy parishes, only seventeen ministers came out. Mr. Wood, of Elie—then of Westruther—was one of the number, and much of the burden of giving supply was laid on him. The work was heavy, but full of encouragement. "There was at the time a very great willingness to hear the Gospel. I had but to send a message to a farm-steading in the forenoon of a week-day, and I had a good congregation assembled in the evening to hear the Word." † In this way the supply of ordinances was kept up till better arrangements could be made.

To meet this state of mind, ministers everywhere were putting forth all their powers. Before the Disruption, when they were prohibited by the Court of Session from preaching in Strathbogie, the sainted Robert M'Cheyne, one of the interdicted, gave this reply: "I can say with Paul that I have preached the Gospel from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum, and no power on earth shall keep me from preaching it in the dead parishes of Scotland." ‡ And if the ministers were thus resolute, the audiences were equally sympathetic. A survivor

* *Free Church Mag.* v. p. 25.
† Disr. Mss. l. p. 35.
‡ Life of Duchess of Gordon, p. 230.

from these times in Strathbogie states: "There was a reverence and anxiety to hear the Gospel that struck all that attended those meetings. The preachers were not only men of ability, but they preached what they appeared to feel; and it came home with power, so that many, young and old, were led to the knowledge of the truth." *

And as in Strathbogie, so it was generally over the country after the impulse of 1843.

"We enter the tent," says Mr. Hastings, of Wanlockhead, "with more earnestness and seriousness in meditating upon our own responsibility; and the people seem to listen with a greater degree of attention and self-application." †

At Ardoch "there has been a greater spiritual concern manifested, and much greater solemnity in hearing the Gospel, than before the Disruption, especially on sacramental occasions, when the sufferings of our Lord brought nigh made His people forget their own. Indeed, I may say that never did minister or people enjoy such seasons so much before." ‡

"The building of the new church [Larbert] was at once proceeded with, the style to be pure Tanfield Hall architecture; and in the meantime a tent was erected on the ground, where regularly, Sabbath by Sabbath, the usual services were conducted with a fervour and earnestness that made that time the happiest to himself, we believe, of all John Bonar's ministry, as certainly it was, for quickening, to the people the most markedly blessed. The stated congregation was as large as had been the average attendance in the parish church, and with scarcely an individual exception, contained all within the bounds of the parish who had at any time given evidence of true graciousness of mind. This was true less or more, we believe, of the general constituency of the Free Church throughout all the parishes of Scotland at the time; but in Larbert it was very specially noticeable—a thing which, indeed, throughout the whole of John Bonar's ministry made itself manifest. While gathering the godly around him, he had the effect

* Notes by Mr. Robb, Keith.

† Disr. Mss. xix. p. 11.

‡ Disr. Mss. xiii. p. 7.

somehow of making others stand apart and separate themselves —a state of things, we remember, heightened greatly at the time when Mr. M'Cheyne was his assistant, and arising, we do not doubt, from subtile and fundamental resemblance between the two men. Anyhow, the minister was cheered by seeing from his new pulpit the faces of, we may say, all the godly whom he had been wont to address, and, by-and-by, of many more besides, in whom even he must have thankfully wondered at seeing spiritual life getting developed." *

At Kenmore there was a vacancy of nearly three years after May, 1843, but under the influence of the Marquis of Breadalbane, able ministers were brought to supply the pulpit, and Mr. Sinclair, on entering on his labours in the spring of 1846, had "abundant evidence" that the preaching had been blest to not a few of the people. The first communion in the summer of 1846 was a precious and refreshing season—a time of revival. "So was the next communion in the winter following. In particular, on the Sabbath, and during a powerful and affecting address in Gaelic by the late Mr. M'Rae of Knockbain, there was an impression so deep and general that it has left its memories to this day [1877] in the hearts of the people." †

Such earnestness on the part of ministers and people might well be expected to yield fruit. One result frequently observed was the impulse given to meetings for prayer and Christian fellowship among the people. In the East Church congregation, Aberdeen, "there has been a large increase in the number of prayer-meetings since the Disruption." ‡

In the parish of Monkton, Mr. M'Farlane states, "many of the elders hold prayer-meetings, and preside at fellowship meetings, in their several districts, and many of the people have formed themselves into fellowship associations, meeting once every fortnight. There is a great increase in regularity of attendance on ordinances. We thankfully receive these things as tokens for good." §

Along with this there were other encouraging results.

* Disr. Mss. lxiv. p. 8.
† *Ibid.*, lxiii. p. 6.
‡ *Ibid.*, xxiv. p. 3.
§ *Ibid.*, xxxiv. p. 4.

At Galston, Mr. M'Indoe states, "there are several cases well attested of individuals who have become sober and orderly in their conduct since their adherence to the Free Church." *

"I have no doubt that by God's grace it was a time of spiritual quickening to many, instances of this kind having come under my own observation. The spirit of Christian love, unity, and liberality which prevailed, powerfully helped to sustain and animate us in the great and onerous work then laid to our hands." †

But what men longed to see were the true fruits of the Christian ministry—the actual conversion of souls; and this blessing was not withheld. Sometimes it was given as the result of private dealing on the part of the people themselves.

"A young woman, whose parents were both exceedingly hostile to the Free Church movement, happened at the Disruption to be a servant in the house of an old farmer, who was a man of decided piety, and cordially attached to our cause. In this house she was first taught to think seriously, and pray to God for her soul's salvation. She went along with her master, and became a member of our Church. This step was so repugnant to the feelings of her parents that they would scarcely permit her for a time to come under their roof. One day her father said, "Your master has deluded you, and led you astray." She replied, "Father, I got much good from my master; he put a question to me you never put; he asked me if I ever prayed to God, and was in earnest about my soul." Her father, whose house was a stranger to the exercises of family worship, made no reply. This youthful disciple has continued firm and faithful, though her old master is now in his grave. ‡

More frequently such cases of conversion were met with in connection with the preaching of the Gospel.

Mr. Gibson, of Kirkbean, has no doubt, from what had come under his own observation, that the Disruption has been "in its own sphere instrumental in producing the conversion of many

* Disr. Mss. xxxv. p. 6.
† Disr. Mss. lxxi. p. 12.
‡ Disr. Mss xxxi.

souls. . . . Many are under deep impression, and are asking the way to Zion." *

Mr. Fergusson, of Dunnichen, laboured not only in his own parish but among the other congregations in the Presbytery of Forfar:—"We had a busy time during that summer [1843] and autumn, but I believe that the Spirit of the Lord was honouring the means of grace as I have seldom, if ever, seen them honoured before or since. 'I believe,' says Mr. Edgar [of Memus] in a letter to me, 'that there are souls who trace their conversion to the sermons in the cart-shed at West Memus;' and perhaps there was not one of these congregations that had not trophies of Divine grace among them as the result of those post-Disruption ministrations." †

It was in these results that ministers found their best comforts in the midst of trial. One of those who belonged to the South of Scotland, refers to this experience:—

"As for house accommodation I had for two years a poor, thatched cottage with two rooms and a closet—the ceiling of neither of the rooms being above six feet in height." In one of them the ceiling stooped so much at the sides that "I had to stoop low to see out of the small window." And illness came, and death, making that small cottage a scene of sore bereavement. As years went on the prospects brightened. "Means were provided for a comfortable old age. I not only never regretted for one moment the sacrifices I had made, but even in the darkest hours of poverty, bereavement, and distress, I could say, and can say still, He hath given me 'an hundred-fold more, even in this present life,' than all that was given up, in satisfaction, and peace, and a competent portion of the things of this life, with the good hope, which is far better, in the world to come of life everlasting. But more still,—*He has given me jewels to place in Christ's crown,*—some of the brightest and purest, dug out of the earth, and some out of the mire, polished by the hand of God himself."

Some of the most eminent ministers of the Church visited

* Disr. Mss. xxiii. p. 8.

† Disr. Mss. lxxviii. p. 13.

Strathbogie, and preached in all the seven parishes of the suspended ministers.

"The Gospel was a new thing in these congregations, and the ministrations of the evangelical ministers were accompanied by a rich blessing, which had the effect of awakening a deep interest in spiritual matters, and resulted in the saving conversion of many souls.

"There was one elder in Keith, Mr. Mitchell, who had long been praying for a blessing on that place, and finding few in the Established Church who were willing to join with him in prayer, had formed a united prayer-meeting consisting of Independents and United Presbyterians. One of the two Secession churches in Keith happened to be vacant, and this church was used by the congregation adhering to the principles of the Free Church as a place of worship. That church was the birth-place of many souls. Such was the desire for prayer that in the parish of Keith, where in 1840 only one elder connected with the Established Church was found to take part in a meeting for prayer, in 1842 seven prayer-meetings were held every week in various districts of the parish, conducted by members of the congregation, in addition to the weekly prayer-meeting held in the church, and a Sabbath morning meeting, attended by upwards of a hundred, in the house occupied by the probationer.

"The first communion dispensed in connection with the General Assembly's ministers, as they were called, was a very memorable occasion.

"Sixty young persons applied for admission to the Lord's table, and a great number of them gave most satisfactory evidence of having given their hearts to the Lord. Mr. M'Donald, of Blairgowrie, now Dr. M'Donald of North Leith, assisted on the Sabbath, and such was the interest awakened under the preaching during that season, that on Tuesday morning, at seven o'clock, the church was crowded to receive a parting word from Mr. M'Donald, before he left by the coach at nine o'clock. That communion was the beginning of a work of grace, the fruits of which are yet apparent in the life and conversation of many who are now office-bearers and members in the

congregation. Some who are now honoured and faithful ministers of the Free Church attended the Sabbath school and Bible classes held during these years in Keith." *

An Independent minister wrote Dr. Guthrie to say that he had a brother who had gone astray, and was sent abroad that he might not disgrace his friends. Years afterwards, in a distant land, that brother had been reached by the grace of God—been plucked as a brand from the burning; and it was a sentence in one of the sermons which Dr. Guthrie had preached many years before in Strathbogie which had been blessed as the means of his conversion. The seed of the Word had sprung up into eternal life. †

One remarkable circumstance was the frequency with which Free Church ministers were called to attend the death-beds of those who had been opposed to them during life.

In Covenanting times this had been the experience of the persecuted ministers, as in the well-known case of the Duke of Rothes, who sent for some of them to comfort him in his dying hours, giving occasion to the remark of his friend the Duke of Hamilton: "This is melancholy work; we banish these men from us, and yet when dying we call for them." Something of the same kind was no infrequent experience after the Disruption.

At Stanley, Perthshire, for example, Mr. Mather of Stanley was often sent for to visit the dying not connected with his "denomination, and even by those who were unfriendly to it. To these calls he was always ready to respond, deeming it sufficient reward if he should be the means of cheering the dying, and of throwing light upon the dark valley through which their spirits were about to pass."

In no case was this more remarkably seen than in the experience of Dr. John Bruce of Edinburgh. Before the Disruption "he was pastor of a congregation which had long been under a succession of able Moderate ministers, having as members of it the Lord President of the Court of Session and other legal functionaries, as well as non-professional men of high social

* Disr. Mss. lxxxiv.

† Memoir, vol. ii. p. 20.

position, most of them strong in their conservative tendencies, as well as gentlemen of excellent personal character."

When the Disruption came, the parting between pastor and people had been more than usually painful. "It is an instructive fact," says Mr. Burns in his interesting "Biographical Sketch," * "that though none of Dr. Bruce's old elders in St. Andrew's Church ever came to hear him after their separation, several of them, and these the most conspicuous, as well as other private members of the congregation, were at their own request ministered to by him on their death-beds."

At Huntly, Mr. Sinclair found that his visits as a Free Church minister were welcomed by the adherents of the Establishment. Especially were those visits welcomed in times of sickness where death seemed to be in the cup. One case he mentions of the daughter of a man in good position, a leading supporter of the Establishment, who was attacked by severe illness. She professed to have examined the Church question, and adhered on principle to the Established Church. Under the hand of disease her conscience was awakened, and her mind filled with distress as to her spiritual state. The visits and exhortations of her own minister gave her no relief, and Mr. Sinclair was sent for. The Church question was of course left in abeyance, "both she and I feeling that we had other and more important business in hand." Finding the state in which she was, Mr. Sinclair sought to probe the wound, exhibiting at once her guilt and the remedy, and the result was an almost immediate closing with the offer of salvation in Christ. She grew rapidly in grace, her spirit naturally was deeply humbled, and all who saw her wondered at the heavenly sweetness which her very looks exhibited. She felt it her duty to see her former pastor, and give her testimony that "should she recover she could no longer adhere to his ministry, but must go to the Free Church." †

Mr. Taylor, of Flisk, mentions an instance in his experience. The daughter of a neighbouring landholder had been taken suddenly ill. She was about eighteen or nineteen years of age, when symptoms of consumption showed themselves, and he

* P. 89.

† Disr. Mss. x.

was asked to call:—"For eight or nine months I visited her, speaking to her as an invalid, and praying with her. It was only at the very last that I saw the impression which had been produced. All along there had been great gentleness and willingness to enter into the exercises; but she was able to walk out and sit up all day, and being naturally reserved, she had not expressed to me anything which indicated real concern. It was for my last interview this was reserved. Her brother was sent up to tell me that she had become rapidly worse. I rode down quickly and saw how hastily the disease had hurried on. Death was busy changing her beautiful countenance and glazing her soft eye. I repeated some passages of Scripture and prayed with her, and then it was that, in the most simple manner, she gave utterance to her feelings, and begged me, after she was gone, to continue my visits to the family. It was a most touching scene, and I yet remember the part of the road where, on returning on horseback, I lifted up a full heart in thanksgiving to the Lord. I need not particularise more cases; but I may remark that when a minister goes to a sick-chamber with the simple aim of speaking a word in season to the weary sufferer, and when in answer to the silent uplifting of his soul on the way, he is guided to a right diagnosis of the case, and the Lord has sped him in the visit, few parts of the ministerial work are more solacing and instructive to himself. To several individuals belonging to the Established Church I have been privileged thus to minister; and in one or two cases the widows, seeing how these visits have been viewed, have, with their families, connected themselves with the Free Church." *

The subject is not often referred to in the Disruption Mss., but the above are instances of what was no unusual experience all over Scotland, giving to the ministers of the Free Church many an opportunity of usefulness of which they gladly availed themselves.

Of those cases of conversion which were met with in Disruption times not a few occurred in remarkable circumstances.

While attending a meeting of the General Assembly, Mr. Wood of Elie, not long before his death, was walking in the

* Disr. Mss. xxxvii. p. 10.

corridor, when he was addressed by an elder from the country. "You will not remember me, Mr. Wood. The last time we met was in February, 1843, at Dinwoodie Green."

"I remember the meeting well, but I cannot recall having met you."

"Ah, we were both young then; we are changed now. But I want to tell you that that meeting was the means of my conversion."

Of the interesting conversation which followed, Mr. Wood did not mention the details; but he referred to the great pleasure which the interview had given him.

A Dumfriesshire minister, however, the Rev. Mr. Smith of Half-Morton, who knows the circumstances, supplies fuller information. The parishioners of Applegarth—as told in a former section of these Annals—were engaged in the game of curling, when their minister called them to aid him in opposing the Non-intrusion deputation. The young man was one of the company who left the ice and crowded into the barn. Nothing unusual occurred during the singing of the psalm or prayer, but when Mr. Clark, of Half-Morton, was reading the 4th chapter of Acts, a strange feeling came over him—a sense of sin such as he never had before experienced. Every successive sentence seemed to strike a new chord of feeling in the young man's heart, and before the twentieth verse had been reached, he felt himself standing naked and defenceless in the very presence of the Lord. With difficulty he restrained his emotions, and would have made his escape from the meeting if the dense crowd had allowed him to do so without disturbing an assembly of men in whom the light of subdued and solemnised feeling was already displayed. The same spirit that led him to look into the darksome abyss of sin, showed him Christ in the richness of His grace. He became a changed man, and has continued for these forty years to walk worthy of his calling. As a Christian, his hand has been ready for every good work. As an elder of the Free Church, he has striven in every possible way to advance her interests and maintain her honour. Mr. William Brockie, whose portrait many in Annandale will recognise in these statements, has said in regard to that meeting: "How many like myself were con-

vinced of sin I never got to know; but of this I am certain, that there was a power greater and higher than the arguments of the deputation, convincing though they were—a power moving on the hearts of that meeting, constraining them to disobey the order of their much respected minister to leave the meeting at the end of his own address."

These were not the only results. Multitudes flocked to a service conducted by Mr. Wood on the following Sabbath, in the church of the neighbouring parish of Dryfesdale. The truth was felt in much of its power over the district. The settlement of Mr. Hugh M'Bryde Broun at Lochmaben, and Mr. Thomas Duncan at Lockerbie, contributed to deepen and extend the impression. The cause of Christ was greatly revived in connection with their varied services on Sabbath days and week days.

The meeting at Dinwoodie Green should not be dismissed without referring to another fact. The three ploughmen on the farm gave in their adherence to the Free Church in consequence of what they heard and felt on the occasion; and what is far better, furnished evidence of having given their hearts to Christ.

At Jedburgh, Mr. Purves records a noble instance of God honouring a firm adherence to principle, when apparently expediency of the highest kind, and human and even Christian affections would point in the opposite way. All the particulars are from the parties' own lips. In a manufacturing town about ten miles from this, lived a couple not equally yoked. The wife is one of the excellent of the earth, meek, gentle, Christian, devoted. Her husband, a large manufacturer, naturally very fiery and imperious in his temper, had quarrelled with the parish minister, and made this a pretext for deserting all church-going habits, and abandoning himself to open ungodliness. Both his and her friends having resolved to remain in the Establishment themselves, seized on the circumstance of his hatred to the parish minister, one of the convocationists, as affording the finest opportunity for retaining her in the Church. "Now," they said, "is the salvation of your husband in your own hand? if you remain in the Church he will return

with you to the house of God whenever Mr. —— leaves." Nothing could be more likely, nor more desirable to all the natural and Christian affections of a wife. She felt the temptation to be very strong, the more especially as the retiring minister had never been very profitable to her. She resolved on her knees to consider the point of duty, and to cry for grace to follow it. The result was a firm conviction that the truth of Christ was with the party leaving the Establishment, and that with them she must cast in her lot, come what might either to herself or others dear to her. She did so. On the second Sabbath after the Disruption her husband came down to Jedburgh on some business, and to see a friend away. We then met in a room in the Inn, for the Dissenters did not look on us with a more kindly eye than the Establishment. The novelty of the place made him an auditor, and an attentive one he seemed to be; but no very decided impression was left on his mind. Next Sabbath morning, rising early, as his practice always was, and walking out to see his horses, "What shall I do with myself to-day?" he asked, when suddenly the thought darted like lightning into his mind, "I'll go down to Jedburgh again." His gig was got instantly ready, and a second time he appeared among us. And a blessed time it was to him and all his house. The very place, the psalm, the prayer, seemed to bring a strange, unwonted awe upon his mind, as he afterwards told me, and the sermon ten-fold deepened the impression. The sermon was on the joy of believing the Gospel. I saw the strange and arrested face, and noticed the unconscious, involuntary signs of deep emotion. The arrow went to his heart. He returned to his home, an awakened, changed being, and made open avowal of it there. It may be well conceived what must have been the feelings of his pious wife, half afraid her leaving the Church might result in the ruin of her husband, when on the third Sabbath thereafter, he came home to her, Saul like, a new creature. The change produced a deep sensation in the whole place, his previous carelessness had been so conspicuous, and the revolution now effected standing out to every eye. With characteristic boldness he avowed his change to everybody. Every Sabbath, he who never entered a place of worship at his

door, was seen to set out on a ten-mile journey to the house of God. Numbers used to turn out at the early hour to assure their eyes of a fact so strange. Though he liked to be fed, however, at the place where he was born again, and these four years has scarcely ever once been absent summer or winter, trying also to bring as many with him as he can, it should be mentioned as an evidence of the genuineness of his change, that he immediately went and was reconciled to the minister with whom he had been at war, and now presents the beautiful spectacle of helping that minister in any of his schemes, and in driving him in his gig whenever on a week-day he has occasion to go from home to preach. And, perhaps, a still more unequivocal evidence is afforded in the saying of his wife to an intimate, who mentioned it to me: "What a change now in our house; it is like heaven in comparison with what once it was!" How much better to follow the plain path of principle and duty at the risk of every consequence, than to give ear to the plans of human expediency, or even the pleadings of Christian, yet mere affection. This good woman followed God, dark to nature as the step seemed to be, and immediately all was light. The heavens dropped down fatness on her."

The late James Miller, Professor of Surgery in the Edinburgh University, was at first strongly opposed to the idea of a Disruption from the Established Church. His father and elder brother being both ministers in the Church, and his house in Edinburgh being their home during Assembly times and on other occasions when they came to Edinburgh, Mr. Miller frequently heard and joined in discussions on the principles of the evangelical and moderate parties in the Church. Though both his father and brother held the evangelical principles strongly, Professor Miller did not agree with them, and always maintained that it was both a foolish and wrong thing to leave the Establishment for a mere fancy or idea. His opposition was due to the fact that he had never studied the question, and also to the fact that at that time he was not a converted man. But as he was not of a mind that could long remain unacquainted with what was interesting so keenly others around him, he determined to examine the whole matter for himself, and go to

the fountain-head of all truth. Accordingly, he resolved to study the Bible with a view to ascertain whether the doctrine of the headship of Christ had Scriptural foundations or not. The result was as might be expected. He became convinced that the evangelical party in the Church were right; but not only so—in studying the Word he found Christ Himself, the doctrine of whose Headship he afterwards maintained by joining the Free Church.

"His studying of the Scriptures was conducted secretly, and though it was known and talked of among his family that something was engrossing him, and that he was studying some book very earnestly, yet it was not known till afterwards that it was the Bible; and also the fact of his change of opinion as to the propriety of leaving the Establishment was not known till he joined the Free Church. On the day of the Disruption he was confined to bed; but on hearing of the event, and of his father and brother being 'out,' with a sigh he said to one of his sisters who brought him the news, 'Well, I must go out too.'

"It was thus that the events connected with the Disruption were the means of bringing about, in God's providence, the conversion of Professor James Miller, a man who among all his friends was considered a typical Christian, active, earnest, and joyous."*

Another memorable instance was that of Mr. Rattray of Brewlands, in Glenisla. "He was the second largest proprietor in the Glen, and was like a father to the people of that sequestered strath, residing in the midst of them—the wise counsellor and kind helper of all who needed advice or assistance.

"At first he was by no means favourable to the Free Church, but the circumstances which have already been referred to in these Annals led to his taking up the cause. 'His hospitable house was opened to the ministers who preached in the Glen; and his intercourse with them awakened in his mind a deep interest in evangelical truth. He listened with great delight to the preaching of the Gospel—the *old old story*, which since the days of Martin had rarely been heard in that district. He was

* Statement by Dr. A. Miller.

greatly instrumental in the organisation of the congregation and the erection of the church and manse, the completion of which, free of debt, he was permitted to witness. In all these efforts for the advancement of the cause of Christ he received the cordial co-operation of Mrs. Rattray, and his liberal spirit had the effect of stimulating the congregation to efforts similar to his own." *

Dr. Wilson of Dundee—now of Edinburgh—was one of those to whom Mr. Rattray opened his mind. "I was invited," he says, "to go to the Glen and expound to the people the principles of the Free Church, and the conditions under which the present Established Church was constituted. There was a large meeting, which was held in the open air on a fine summer evening, and I have since been told that no person, young or old, who attended that meeting continued to adhere to the Established Church. I was the guest of Mr. Rattray, and remember being very much impressed with what he said in the course of the evening, as indicating that the cause of the Free Church, which he had espoused, was not, at the root of it, an ecclesiastical or political movement, but in the deepest sense religious. He spoke with trembling tones of the new interest he felt in the Gospel of grace, and of the new sense of indebtedness to Christ which had been awakened within him. He said that some of his old friends had been representing to him how much his adherence to the Free Church would cost him, what large demands would necessarily be made upon him for the building of a new church and manse, and for giving a site for both, besides for the maintenance of a minister of the Free Church from year to year. He said he was by no means blind to these facts, and had his mind been in the same state as formerly they might have diverted him from the course he was pursuing. 'But,' he added, 'these people do not know that these things are a great inducement to me to persevere. I cannot tell what pleasure it gives me to be called upon to give, and to be able to do it. It has been to me a new and delightful sensation to give—to know that the Lord Jesus is conferring on me the privilege of doing some little thing for Him to whom I owe all."

* Disr. Mss. lxxxv.

Animated by such principles, he was, as might have been expected, liberal in his gifts. Besides subscribing for the erection of church and manse, he paid off all the debt remaining on the buildings after they were finished. He gave the site for church and manse along with five acres of land as a glebe, at a merely nominal feu-duty. Half the cost of building the congregational school was paid by him. By will he left a property valued at £6000 to certain mission schemes of the Free Church, besides £20 a-year to the congregational school. And finally he bequeathed £50 a-year as a permanent contribution to the Sustentation Fund of the congregation in Glenisla.*

It was not long before his end that these generous arrangements were completed, and soon affliction came. His only son —a most promising boy—was removed by death about a week before himself. "I visited him," says Mr. Bain, of Coupar-Angus, "on his dying bed at Bridge of Allan, where he had gone for his health, and I was greatly cheered to find how abundantly the Lord had rewarded him for his efforts in advancing His cause by the calm peace and full assurance which he possessed; '*I found Christ,*' said he to me, '*in that tent,*' referring to the temporary erection which had been put up before the church was built."

Father and son were laid in the same grave, and his memory is still cherished with the deepest affection in the Glen, where he had been so long and so universally loved.

One additional example may be given from the Presbytery of Breadalbane:—"In a populous parish in the Presbytery, one solitary member of the kirk-session came out. He was a farmer, a steady man of good moral character; but, as he afterwards declared, 'it was cruel to make him an elder at all, for he was not a Christian.' What moved him to come out was the conviction, which he felt strongly, that the God-fearing people joined the Free Church, and that, therefore, it was his duty and safety. He became an elder of the newly-formed congregation of the Free Church, over which a young minister had been ordained. Some months after, he sent in a letter resigning his office. Without accepting it, the minister was requested by

* Statement by the Rev. Mr. Simpson, of Glenisla.

the session to confer with him. The elder said with tears: 'The sermons I have been listening to of late have shown me my utter unfitness. *I am a lost sinner!*' He was for weeks in deep distress of soul, and earnestly seeking the Saviour. At the following communion season, the Lord revealed Himself to his soul in the glory of His love. His bonds were loosed. He was filled with peace and joy, which he could scarce refrain from giving public expression to. Ever since, he has consistently maintained his profession—a lively Christian and warm-hearted office-bearer. 'I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not.'" *

Thus it was all through the conflict and turmoil of Disruption times. God was giving testimony to the word of His grace. Even in the hottest of the fight the sermons and addresses were finding their way to the hearts of the people, and impressions were made and results obtained for which many a hearer will have reason to bless God in time and in eternity.

* Disr. Mss. lx. p. 3.

LXII. Longing Desires for Revival.—Mr. Glen of Benholm.

During the years which followed the Disruption there prevailed generally throughout the Free Church an eager desire for such a revival of religion as had been seen in 1839 at Kilsyth and Dundee. "In temporal things God has prospered us," said Mr. Sym, of Greyfriars, Edinburgh, "beyond our most sanguine expectations; but is it not notorious that many of the more devout among us are waiting for the outpouring of the Divine Spirit, and wearying for a revival of pure and undefiled religion?" *

At Kirkbean: "The office-bearers and members are like a band of men whose hearts the Lord has touched. Many souls are under deep concern. The Session have special meetings for prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit, and are looking out for a time of soul-refreshing and soul-reviving. Lord, when shall it be? How long, O Lord! Send the breath of the Spirit."

If the secret communings of many a manse and many an elders' meeting could be opened, it would be seen that this was the object for which men laboured and prayed to an extent of which the public were little aware.

As an example of this, we shall take the case of a Kincardineshire minister, Mr. Glen, of Benholm, who lived and died in the midst of his people comparatively unknown. A regular attendant at Synod and Assembly, he never let his voice be heard in their debates. He was a classical scholar of cultivated tastes—a faithful preacher of no common gifts; but, above all, a man whose force of character and transparent simplicity and godly sincerity won the respect of all classes in the community—one

* Blue Book, 1852, p. 227.

of those devout and devoted men who are the true strength of any Church. The manuscript notes which he has left behind will enable us to give some indication of the earnestness of his desires. It may be well, however, in the first instance, briefly to sketch the trials through which he passed. It was no easy thing in those days to be a Free Church minister.

After the meeting of Convocation in November, 1842, where he gave in his adherence without reserve, it was necessary to make known to the congregation what he had done. "The Lord guide me," he says, "and my people in these trying times. May I not be rash or self-confident. Oh, for daily supplies of heavenly grace!"

On the 9th of January, the Kirk-Session met in the Manse—all the ten elders being present—to consider what course must be taken in consequence of the minister having signed the Convocation resolutions binding himself to leave the Establishment. After prayer for light, the elders were left by themselves to deliberate. "When I returned, it was intimated to me that the Session unanimously and strongly approved of my conduct, and resolved to hold by my ministry, and yet, when the form of concurrence was produced, only four elders found themselves at liberty to sign it. Another has agreed this day [10th]. The result of this meeting is somewhat discouraging, but we must lay our account with difficulties."

The next step was an appeal to the people. "On the evening of 19th February, we had a meeting in the church to hear addresses from a deputation of ministers on the Church question. The evening was most unfavourable—wet, dark, and stormy—and yet there were a good many people in the church. The addresses were good. Mr. Lumsden, of Barry, gave a short history of the present conflict, and the gradual encroachments of the civil courts. Mr. Wilson, of Carmylie, took a Scriptural view of the subject, hinting that those who remained in the old Establishment, which was about to disclaim the headship of Christ, may be putting themselves in a position in which they cannot expect the blessing of God. This idea he brought out very strikingly, drawing his illustration from John xiv. 22, 23. We got more adherences than I expected. The step I have now

taken has subjected me to the persecution of the heritors of this parish. I pray God to give me grace to bear it meekly without returning reviling for reviling, but contrariwise, I would ask all blessings on my opponents."

In this spirit he went forward. Men have admired the courage with which parish ministers in the country gave up their all; but little did the public know at what cost—in many cases—it was done. As the crisis approached, there was a dark cloud hanging over the Manse of Benholm. When the elders held that meeting in the manse on the 9th of January, and Mr. Glen left them to deliberate on their course, he retired to another room to hang in trembling anxiety over the sick-bed of a beloved child lying between life and death. Next day hopes of recovery revived. "Our little boy has been better, and our hearts are beginning to be lightened." The following week there was a change: "Alas, the clouds have returned after the rain." The illness was such that the doctor intimated there was no hope, and "we endeavoured with all earnestness to commend our little one—our boy—into the hands of God. This was a very solemn transaction when we went to prayer, the poor mother having her apparently dying child on her knee. This was my birth-day (21st January); at one time I thought my birth-day might have been the dying day of my son." Again there was a brief interval of reviving strength, but on the 26th of the month the end came. We saw that he was fast dying, and "in a few trembling words I endeavoured to commend his departing spirit into the hands of God. His breathing was now quick, and within two or three seconds of the time I ceased to speak he gently fell asleep on his mother's knee." Then came the funeral—"a day never to be forgotten by me, in which I laid the head of my beloved child in the dust. Oh, how humbling—how crushing to frail humanity—a mother's delight—a father's right hand taken from our warm embrace and laid in the cold earth. Oh, how could nature endure the thought, had we not the sure hope of the soul's salvation that while the dust, according to the Divine decree, has returned to its kindred element, the soul redeemed by the precious blood of Christ has gone to glory."

If we have drawn aside the veil from these scenes of domestic sorrow, it is only that the reader may know what the trials were which had to be endured, and how at the very time when the sacrifice of the Disruption must be made, personal grief added bitterness to the cup. Mr. Glen could not flinch, but his feelings were naturally keen, and it was no wonder that the strain told on his health. Pulpit duty began to press heavily: "I am well aware that the troubles in which I am involved are preying upon my spirits and impairing my strength. Oh that the Lord would show me the path of duty, give me a clear conscience, and that peace in Himself which the world cannot impart!" "It is sometimes painful to flesh and blood to anticipate a speedy separation from the mass of my people, and even to leave this sweet abode. Lord, give direction and support."

Calmly in the midst of these feelings he held on his course, but he was not insensible to the sacrifice: "Oh that I were duly impressed with the solemn circumstances in which I am placed; if spared likely soon to be stripped of all my earthly substance, and cast on the bounties of God's providence. The Lord has wonderfully provided for me hitherto, and I would humbly trust that he will not forsake me.* Oh that I were enabled to act with greater singleness of heart on the present trying occasion, committing my way to God, and casting my wife and children on His care!"

The 18th of May, 1843, accordingly found him in his place at St. Andrew's Church: "I was in the street in the midst of the concourse of people, and never can I forget the moment when a shout from the crowd announced that the retiring members were making their appearance without. The rending asunder

* In this he was not disappointed. A few weeks before the Disruption, while he was yet at a loss for accommodation, the farm-house of Ballandro was vacated. As the farmer, Mr. Webster, resided on another farm in St. Cyrus, he was able to place it at Mr. Glen's disposal, and there he resided for seven years till the site for a manse was got, Mr. Webster declining to receive rent except for the first year. Mr. Glen once stated to the writer that he could not explain how it was, but if ever he wanted money for any purpose, it seemed somehow to come more readily to his hand after the Disruption than it used to do before.

of the Church of Scotland was a truly solemn event, but it has become inevitable. Mingled feelings of sorrow and joy struggled in my breast, but joy I think predominated."

On Sabbath, 28th May, the farewell sermon was preached in the church at Benholm. "I was carried through to the last beyond all expectation; but after the blessing was pronounced I was a good deal affected while the people were retiring."

On the following Thursday the manse was left; and as we have so few examples of these scenes in the Disruption Mss., we ask attention to the narrative:—"Our family, on the 1st of June, removed from the manse to the farm-house of Ballandro. In some respects this is a very sad event, but in truth I did not feel it as such. The Lord was pleased to give me such assurance that I was in the path of duty that I could take part in preparing 'stuff for removing,' and see all carried away without almost any emotion. I bless the Lord for His kindness to me and mine on this memorable day. My sister-in-law and our two little girls went off in the forenoon in one of the carts, not to return again to that sweet abode. My poor wife and myself set off on foot before one o'clock, having seen all carried out and put on the carts. We went away in a solemn frame of mind, but by no means downcast. The Lord gave my wife great firmness, and she shed not a tear till she began by the way to speak of the grave which held the remains of our dear little boy. His dust sleeps there, but his soul is in heaven.

"A very wet afternoon, but people were kind to us, and we got all our things safely under roof; and when we sat down to tea amidst trunks and boxes, our hearts were full of gratitude to God that He had given us such an abode in existing circumstances. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits!'"

Meantime his health, never robust, began to feel the strain of Disruption trials, and the work that was needed in surrounding parishes.

One Sabbath, he says: "Very feeble; have cause to wonder that I am able to preach at all." Another time: "Had little strength this day. I sometimes fear that my vigour is so im-

paired that it may never be restored to me." Again: "Preached but feebly to-day by reason of bodily infirmity. Oh, that my inefficient services may not injure the cause of Christ among my people." Once again: "Painful feeling in my head, which often greatly unfits me for public duty. This is indeed at present my thorn in the flesh."

In the midst of these feelings there was another cause of anxiety which lay heavy on his heart—the low state of spiritual life, as he considered it, in the parish, and the fear lest his own defects and shortcomings might be to blame. Many a sentence in these notes tells of the sensitiveness of his feelings on these points and the severity of the standard by which he judged himself.

"Weak this day. Had little comfort, and I fear gave little satisfaction.

"Had but little power this day. The Lord forgive my great unworthiness.

"Considerably embarrassed all this day. Oh, that the Lord would pity me, for I am weak."

Bodily weakness was thus combined to some extent with mental depression; but all through those records it is striking to observe how bravely, under a sense of duty, he goes on doing his work.

The opening of the New Free Church took place on the 10th of December, 1843, and is noted as a memorable day in the parish of Benholm. "I was permitted to preach in the forenoon on Gen. xxviii. 17; a poor sermon as written, but I was enabled to add some useful passages in delivering it; and I do bless the Lord for the gracious support given me. Mr. Nixon of Montrose, preached afternoon and evening, both able and faithful discourses. He baptised our little Margaret at the former diet. Oh, that the church which we endeavoured to consecrate to God may indeed be one of His own temples—a Bethel, a house of God! Oh, what cause of thanksgiving to God, that He has so provided for a handful of poor people in this place! The Lord's name be praised!"

Now it was that his longings for the revival of religion began more prominently to show themselves. The awakening of reli-

gious life, which was so marked in various districts of Scotland, had stirred up in the minds of many ministers an intense desire that "the shower of blessing" might visit their own part of the vineyard; and we give Mr. Glen's experience as an example of what was really a very widespread feeling in the Free Church at the time.

The opening of the church was followed at once, on Monday evening, by a prayer meeting, which he addressed from Ps. lxxxv. 6: "Wilt Thou not revive us again?" "I wish to press the subject of a revival on my people. The Lord revive His work in my own soul!"

Next Sabbath "took up the point that a revival of religion is *needful*. I bless the Lord for the countenance shown me throughout this day."

Again, during the same month, he returns to it, preaching on the *efficient cause* of revivals: "Oh, that the Lord for His own glory may own this feeble attempt to revive His work in this place! Were my own piety more genuine and high-toned, I have cause to believe that my influence might be greater."

From this time forward he gives a long course of sermons on the subject. It formed, indeed, the great theme of his preaching during the year which followed, as he went on expounding and urging home his views with all the earnestness of a man of God who looked and longed for the blessing from on high. The spirit which prompted these appeals comes out from time to time as the series goes on. "Was enabled to speak with considerable energy from Ps. cxix. 93. The congregation very large. Oh, that I truly felt the solemnity and responsibility of my station when called to address large assemblages of my fellow-sinners! Oh, that the Spirit were poured out to touch the hearts of many!"

The outward success of the congregation pleases but does not satisfy him. In March he finds there has been an addition to the number of communicants. "The cause of the Free Church is, therefore, as yet gaining ground in this place, and I do bless God for so much encouragement. Oh, that we saw still more cheering encouragement in the true conversion of many souls!"

To such longings, however, there seemed for a time to be

little response, and at the end of four months he is led to great searchings of heart. "To all appearance, the long series of sermons on revivals has been productive of no good. There must be something wrong in myself. The Lord show me how I may be more useful, if it is His holy will to spare me a little longer for His service."

Still the earnestness does not relax, and signs of encouragement are not wholly withheld.

"Not very well; speaking with some difficulty. I leave what was said in the hands of God. A very large audience drawn together—I know not for what cause. I trust God has some gracious end in view."

"Great freedom given me this day. Oh, how easy it is to preach when God is pleased to give gracious support!"

"Greatly assisted this evening, and wonderfully upheld. The audience seemed much affected."

After his return from the Assembly of 1844, he gave some account of the proceedings connected with Dr. Charles Brown's sermon: "Some little excitement among the people. The Lord increase it more and more."

"Oh, that I saw more fruit of my labours; or, rather, oh, that there were more fruit whether I see it or not!"

Such earnest longings on the part of a good and faithful servant are none the less impressive because he was called to go on sowing the seed, faithfully, ably, prayerfully preaching the Gospel and watching for souls, but destined to prove the truth of the saying that "one soweth and another reapeth."

These notices of Mr. Glen's personal experience and inner life may give some indication of the religious earnestness which prevailed in Disruption times. Few, indeed, were so devout as he. Few led a life of such close walking with God. But generally among the manses of the Free Church there was no small measure of the same state of mind. It was a season of religious awakening, in which men were feeling the impulse of quickened spiritual life, and all over the Church there were prayers going up to heaven, and longing desires cherished that God would come amidst scenes of revival to "refresh His heritage when it was weary."

LXIII. Revival.

The Free Church, if true to her antecedents, might well cherish those longing desires to which we have referred. She "had been nursed," as Dr. Charles Brown once reminded the Assembly, "in the bosom of religious revival." It was in 1839, the year in which the fatal Auchterarder decision was pronounced, that William Burns preached at Kilsyth, when that great spiritual movement began, the effects of which were felt all over Scotland down to the time of the Disruption. Even amidst the turmoil and struggle of 1843 the impulse was not lost, as the memorable meeting of Assembly in 1844 sufficiently proved. During the years that followed, amidst the earnest, evangelical preaching of deputations and the more ordinary means of grace, there were tokens of spiritual blessing in various localities. At Ferryden, for example, not far from Benholm, on the same line of coast, Dr. Brewster was permitted in 1846 to see among the fishermen something of that religious movement which Mr. Glen was praying for and longing to see among the people of Johnshaven. "I spent three hours," says Dr. A. Bonar, "speaking with anxious souls in private, and preached to them twice. The scene one day reminded me of Dundee times. They were so easily moved to tears and sobs, though their faces were those of hard rough fisher-women. There are about thirty very deeply convinced of sin, and many more under the Spirit's strivings. Dr. Brewster's female teacher has been remarkably useful.*

But though individual cases of this kind were met with here and there over the country, it was not till a later period that the movement assumed such proportions as to arrest general attention.

* Letter dated 18th September, 1846; *Miss. Record*, 1847, p. 218

A great religious revival had, in 1859, spread over the north of Ireland; its influence was felt among the Scottish Churches; the Carrubber's Close Mission was begun in Edinburgh; the whole religious state of Scotland was full of promise, but signs of excitement had shown themselves, and the question arose as to what the Free Church must do. Was this a genuine Revival? men asked—was the hand of God truly in it? In the words of Mr. Nixon, of Montrose, was it "a God-given or a man-made Revival"?

As time went on these doubts were removed. The Church was, in reality, longing and eager to welcome any signs of reviving spiritual life, anything betokening the approach of a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. This was the reward she coveted after all her sacrifices and trials, and it soon appeared that she was not left to look for it in vain.

It was during the year 1860 that Scotland generally experienced the power of a decided religious awakening. The mining districts and fishing villages of the East coast were the first to show the effects of the movement, which, however, soon made its presence felt in the towns and rural parishes. At the following Assembly there were returns from more than 160 congregations, reporting either a decided awakening or a great increase of spiritual earnestness among the people. "I never," said Dr. Roxburgh, "was more solemnly and gratefully impressed than with this evidence of a widespread, genuine revival of religion in the land." And year after year the work continued to advance.

From Dumfriesshire, we have the experience of Dr. James Buchanan, Professor in the New College, who, with his calm mind, would have been the last man to over-estimate the reality. "A venerable ancestor of mine attended the revival at Cambuslang, and was spared to the ripe age of ninety years; and it was from his venerable lips, and most exemplary character, that I was first led to take a delight in the writings of Owen, Traill, and Witherspoon, which were his daily companions. More recently, I have been privileged to witness the effects of the revival in the country district in which I reside in summer. For the last seventeen years, during which I have had the summer

at my own disposal, I have been in the habit of preaching regularly, on the Lord's day evening, in the open air in Dumfriesshire. During the whole of that time I have had the attendance of members of all religious denominations—Episcopalians, United Presbyterians, Established Church people—who would not come to any Free Church, but came to my tent. During these seventeen years, I had no evidence, though I had no doubt that the good seed sown was not thrown altogether away; but I could not put my hand upon a single case of decided conversion. Last year, suddenly, and without apparently any human instrumentality to account for it, the whole district was visited with an outpouring of the Spirit of God. Now, in my immediate neighbourhood, I can point to many households where, for the first time, family worship has been established and is now regularly maintained. The whole morals of the district seem to have undergone a complete change; and, as the police expressed it to me, their office was, so far as serious crimes were concerned, all but a sinecure. Some of those who came under religious impressions at that time may possibly have gone back, and therefore it would not be right in us to report all these cases of transient awakening as if they were cases of true conversion to God. We must judge of them by their subsequent fruits; but, at the same time, I know intemperance and profligacy of all kinds have been checked, and that the minds of the whole community have become impressed and awed by a sense of Divine things."*

At Carnwath, Dr. Walker mentions a fellowship meeting which had been held in the village of Quothquan for thirty or forty years, and to which the year 1860 brought a great quickening of spiritual life, the effects of which were felt over the neighbouring districts of Peeblesshire and Lanarkshire. He records various striking cases of conversion,† among which the experience of one woman is especially mentioned,—"Though there was no physical prostration, it might be truly said that she had been stricken. For several days there was scarcely a ray of hope. The minister of the

* Blue Book, 1862, p. 184.

† *Record*, July, 1860, p. 288.

church with which the sufferer was connected was sent for. He warned her against going to the "prayer meetings;" but she declined to promise. He spoke of her being brought to the asylum. "If God brings me to the asylum," she replied, "I hope He will save my soul." Through weeks of agony she bore on—her eye still in the one direction—her thoughts and longings still Christwards—willing to suffer anything rather than go back—recognising in what had come upon her God's great mercy. No great joy had yet been found; but some degree of calm—of hope in Christ. Through the secluded country parishes which had been chiefly acted on by the Quothquan awakening, he knew of from forty to fifty persons who had professed either to have given themselves to the Saviour, or to be earnestly seeking Him. An interesting class of these consisted of the young farm lads—youths perhaps thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen years of age." *

In Fife, Mr. Taylor, of Flisk, states: "In 1860-61, the years of revival, I could count up about eighteen in one little congregation as sharing in the benefits of that awakening. Persons that had kicked against faithful and tender dealing, have submitted themselves; stillness, and reverence, and expectancy characterise our Sabbath meetings. As it is my daily prayer, so it is my hope that the Lord is doing us good in His good pleasure."†

Kilsyth was once more the scene of religious awakening. "For three months," Mr. Black states, "the meetings continued. There was no excitement, certainly nothing approaching to extravagance. At our communion in November, between fifty and sixty were admitted to the Lord's Table—nearly every one of whom professed to have been brought out of darkness into light. They were of all ages, from seventeen to fifty or sixty. The tone of piety was raised among the professedly religious. The whole aspect of the place was changed, the decency and decorum of the streets presenting a very pleasing contrast to the former state of things."

At Deskford there was a remarkable movement. "A special work of the Lord has been going on in this congregation for

* *Missionary Record*, 1860, p. 288.

† Disr. Mss. xxxvii.[2] p. 19.

upwards of seven months. A very striking case of conversion occurring more than two years ago, exercised a great influence in preparing for it, and gave confidence in the reality of the change wrought by the effectual application of the truth to the heart. The Lord's own hand has been recognised throughout the whole progress of the work, no special importance being attached to any particular instrumentalities. There has been great variety in the mode of the Spirit's operation, bringing out very strongly the truth that a human judgment on this subject can be rightly formed only upon a careful observation of actual facts. In by far the majority of cases, the change produced was marked by nothing beyond the natural effect of the application of the truth of God, by the Spirit of life gradually and most surely leading the burdened soul to find peace and rest in Christ. In a few, the details of which are sufficiently striking, the immediate presence of God was more vividly realised, and in a manner fitted to produce the most powerful impression on others. In all these, it was made very evident what was the purpose which this was designed to serve. The circumstances in which they occurred entirely precluded the idea of human agency or mere human emotion." *

One more example we take from a rural parish in Forfarshire. In the spring of 1868, signs of awakening showed themselves among the people, who, of their own accord, made their state of mind known to the minister. It was not till the end of autumn, however, that meetings were held, but at once a deep impression was made—men, women, and children, all sharing the blessing. At the close of one of the sermons in the month of February, all those were asked to remain behind who had derived benefit from the work, when from 120 to 130 did so; but these, it was believed, did not amount to half of those who had been really awakened. The blessing descended manifestly on some of the farms in the neighbourhood.† On one large farm there was scarcely a family which had not been moved, besides two or three of the young ploughmen in the bothy.

One remarkable circumstance was the prominent position

* *Missionary Record*, 1860, p. 288.

† Rep. on Rel. and Mor., App. 1869, pp. 1, 2.

taken in these revival movements by laymen, some of whom did not belong to the Free Church, but whose aid was none the less cordially welcomed. Perhaps the most distinguished of these lay preachers was Mr. Brownlow North, an Episcopalian, the son of a rector, the grandson of an English bishop. After passing through the great spiritual change, he took up the doctrines of the Christian faith according to the Calvinistic view, preaching a free gospel, and setting forth the message of salvation with a freshness and power which has not often been equalled. Though a decided Episcopalian, yet he had such a fellow-feeling with the Free Church, and co-operated so cordially with many of her ministers, that it was proposed to give him some recognised position as an evangelist. The matter was brought before the Assembly; a committee was appointed, including some of the most strict adherents of orthodoxy, and, after full conference with Mr. North, there was a unanimous decision in favour of the proposal. His doctrinal views were so entirely in accordance with those of our Church, and his gifts and graces had been found to be so singularly fitted for impressing the minds of men, that Episcopalian though he was, all parties agreed to recognise him as a fellow-labourer whose services were to be welcomed by the ministers of the Free Church. Dr. Cunningham was Moderator of Assembly and most cordially gave Mr. North the right hand of fellowship. Revival work was all the more welcome that it was felt to be a platform on which earnest men of all denominations could meet and co-operate.

While the rural districts of Scotland were thus, as we have seen, largely sharing in the blessing, the same results to a great extent were met with in towns, and especially among the newly formed territorial charges. Thus at the West Port, Mr. Tasker writes: "At this moment I have nearly sixty candidates for communion, two-thirds of whom date their serious impressions within the last three months. At present we have at least sixty persons who hold district prayer meetings in almost every close of the West Port." *

At the Pleasance, Mr. Cochrane reports: "The year 1860 will

* Blue Book, 1861, p. 98.

be ever memorable in the history of this congregation. Since last Assembly the increase in the membership is 203.* At the close of the usual weekly services on some occasions four, five, six, and upwards, have remained in deep concern to speak about the state of their soul. Meetings for prayer have been held by the people themselves, while not a few of the awakened and hopefully converted have taken part in these along with the minister and others. Were the question put, Who have been most instrumental in building up and adding members to the congregation? the reply would be, The people themselves.

So also in Glasgow, Mr. Howie at the Wynd Church reported that since the New Year the number of those impressed at their meetings and Sabbath services had been very great, and the increase had been due to a remarkable outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Of those added to the congregation about eighty were communicants for the first time, and with only one or two exceptions were able to give a clear, intelligent, and satisfactory account of their conversion. The moral and spiritual change wrought in many of them was so marked as to astonish and confound those who were most sceptical.†

At Finnieston, Dr. A. Bonar states: "The population of the district is about 4000, and we are able to point to dwellings in every part of it in which some soul has been born again, so far as man can judge. In the two streets nearest our church we know of fifty persons at least, regarding whom there is reason to believe that they have passed from death to life during the last three years. Last summer it was the Bible lesson in the day school that seemed to be specially owned of God to the conversion of six or seven, and to the awaking of many more. One marked case of conversion resulted from discipline in the session. Some cases of apparent and satisfactory awaking have occurred in connection with the visits of elders.‡

But gratifying as all this was, no cases were more remarkable than those in the fishing villages.

Mr. Davidson of Latheron was, as we have seen, a devoted

* Blue Book, 1861, p. 98.
† *Ibid.*, 1861, p. 101.
‡ *Ibid.*, 1861 p. 100.

labourer in his Master's service, and it is gratifying to find the last days of his ministry brightened by scenes of revival. The accounts of the Irish movement in 1859 had awakened among his people "a feeling of solemnity and expectation." There were prayer meetings thrice a-week in the schoolroom, which held 200, but soon they were compelled to seek larger accommodation in the Church. The people were thirsting for the Word. It was a pleasure to preach on Sabbath, and the attendance at the prayer meetings increased to an average of 400.

"It was now the beginning of February, at which season several boats' crews from the opposite coasts of Moray and Banff are in the habit of annually taking up their residence here, in order to prosecute the white fishing during the spring. As it was well known that the revival had been very marked and very extensive over that district of country, much anxiety prevailed, and many inquiries were made on their arrival here. Never were the habits of men more changed. Formerly they were as a class utterly regardless of religious duties, while drinking and profane swearing were common. Now they seemed *new men* as different from their former selves as can well be conceived; for not only did they abstain from desecrating the Sabbath, or entering a public-house, or uttering an oath, but they seemed to "call the Sabbath a delight," and to abound in religious duties on all days of the week, when not at sea. These crews landed on different parts of our coast, and the report of their altered habits greatly strengthened the impressions already existing as to the reality of the work. By-and-by they found their way to our meetings, and took part in them. Hitherto there had been no violent demonstrations, though a good deal of subdued feeling was manifested by tears and sighs, but soon several became so affected as to relieve their pent feelings in loud cries and fervent prayers for mercy and pardon, and this too from night to night, for now the meetings had become nightly, and often continued till morning. Many of both sexes were wont to stand up in rapid succession as if under an irresistible impulse, and to utter the most earnest and fervent supplications, both for themselves and others, so that it was with difficulty that order could be maintained. This violent agitation, however, only lasted for a

few nights, during which there were some cases of prostration and fainting. Afterwards, matters assumed a more quiet and edifying appearance, and the work went on calmly and agreeably. Some of these strangers were judicious men, but others of them were boisterous, and evidently spoke for effect. This required to be checked, but it was wonderful how little of this appeared among men formerly unaccustomed to take part in religious exercises of any kind.

"The effect produced by this state of matters, not only on those who professed to have come under the power of the truth, but also on the population generally, was very great. As to the former, they never wearied of spiritual duties. It became their meat and their drink to be so engaged. The Bible was seldom out of their hands at every spare hour. The attainment of Scriptural knowledge seemed to be their great delight, and prayer and praise their element. They prized fellowship with one another, and frequent conference with all who were willing and able to counsel and direct them in the path of duty. Their whole manner and conduct much resembled those of old, when 'men took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.'" *

Still more striking was the case of Ferryden, near Montrose, in which Mr. Nixon took the deepest interest, and of which we have a valuable account from his pen. Speaking of the results among the people, he says:—

"No one that comes in contact with them can fail to be struck by the general consistent seriousness of their deportment. Visit them in their houses, talk with them as they are working inside or outside of their dwellings at their lines, exchange a few words with them as you meet them on the way, or overhear their conversation as in twos and threes you at any time find them conversing with each other, and the likelihood is that, in nine instances out of ten, you will find their attention taken up with the Word of God, with the work of Christ, with the realities of faith and of eternity. There has been in fact a solemnity in the midst of that people for months that renders every day in the midst of them like a Sabbath-day, and causes you to feel the

* Life of Rev. G. Davidson, pp. 173-75.

intrusion of the ordinary conversation current in the world to be offensive trifling.

"Have the people, then, been generally converted to God? I am far enough from meaning to affirm anything like that. In an orchard in spring you may see a wonderful display of beautiful blossoms. But by-and-by many of them are blighted and perish; and it is only a moderate proportion of them that ripen into full-grown healthy fruit. So has it generally been in regard to any wide awakening in any part of the Church. So may it turn out even in regard to this corner of the vineyard. Yet in Ferryden the work of the Lord has been comparatively a work of singular extensiveness and power. One excellent judge declared that he had seen nothing more decided in Ireland lately or formerly in Kilsyth. Upwards of one hundred applicants were admitted in December, for the first time, to the communion—a large proportion of whom professed and appeared to have come, in a greater or less degree, into the light and liberty of the Gospel. Not a few who were regular in attendance on Church ordinances for years, have come to feel that they were mere formalists, and profess to be now quickened from their state of death in trespasses and sins. Some believers of other years have been baptised anew by the Spirit of God, and visited with a blessing which they felt as if they had not room enough to receive. The elders, and other intelligent Christian men of the village, after examining into the matter as well as they could, told me some time ago that probably there were two hundred or more, giving something like evidence that they had lately come under the power of saving grace; an opinion which was modestly given, and which of course remains to be tested by time and experience."*

As to the work itself he states: "If, however, one thing has been more remarkably characteristic of the work than another, it has been the little that man has had to do with it. The hand of man has scarcely been seen in it. The Lord has signally taken and kept the work in His own hands; and the folly of attempting to confine the Spirit of God to this or that man, or

* Account of the work of God at Ferryden. By Rev. N. Nixon. 1860, pp. 12-16.

to any half-dozen of men, has been emphatically rebuked, in this instance by the sovereign way in which the Lord has done His great and gracious work without much direct and ascertainable use of any specially extolled, or any other human instrumentality whatsoever.

"There were two remarkable weeks in the history of this work of the Lord at Ferryden—the first from Monday 7th to Saturday 12th of last November; the second from Saturday the 12th to Sabbath 20th November [1859]. The first of these weeks was one of deep widespread conviction of sin and misery, during which they were in their restlessness, constantly going into each others' houses, speaking of their burdened and intolerable state, declaring that they could not live if they did not get Christ, and salvation in Him; and by all this incessant intercourse and outspokenness, exciting a deeper sense of sin and misery in each others' hearts, till, toward the end of that first week, they reached such a state of general excitement, as to be ready, on the first occasion of any gathering, for an unrestrainable outbreak.

"Such an outbreak accordingly took place in the church on Saturday evening, without anything to excite it in what was being said by the excellent and earnest layman from the North, who was then addressing them. And then, on the Sabbath, and at some subsequent meetings, this effervescence of their wrought-up feelings gradually spent itself. These and some other outward and physical manifestations, were, however, mere accidents of the work, not essentials of it. The Lord was graciously pleased to deliver and preserve the susceptible people, to a great extent, from confounding these accessories with the substance of the work, and to direct their minds to the true nature of that great salvation which they needed and were led to seek for in the Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore, though in the crisis of their overwhelming excitement, some were shaken, and even prostrated, yet in the great majority of cases there was happily little or nothing at all of this bodily prostration in those who passed from death to life.

"Such a transition was apparently accomplished in not a few during the week beginning with Saturday the 12th, and

onward to Sabbath, the 20th November. This was a week of deliverance, as the other had been one of conviction. One young married woman, who had been at no meetings, and, as she said, sought and found the Lord in her own house, was to appearance savingly converted shortly after midnight on Saturday morning, the 12th. And as her case shows, the report of her having got as it were the start of the burdened sinners around her, brought them in crowds to her house during the Saturday from an early hour, and caused them to feel greatly increased distress, as they gazed on her emancipated state, and contrasted it with their own continued and terrible bondage. She was thus the most powerful of all the sermons they heard. And, indeed, if one instrumentality rather than another is to be condescended on, it seems to me that then, and at all stages of the work, the converse which they held with each other, anent their sorrows and their joys, was among the most easily recognised means by which the Lord carried on His work of grace in the midst of them. The second week having so auspiciously begun by the conversion already mentioned, at every successive hour of it, ministering angels seem to have got fresh messages to carry to the courts above, concerning the repentance of another and another sinner which fills all heaven with gladness. And ere that second week had passed, many a heart that had been bursting with its sorrow, was breaking out in songs of rapturous joy."

While these things were going on in town and country, the ministers of the Free Church felt it to be their duty to throw themselves heart and soul into the work, seeking to guard it from evil, and prayerfully to carry out those great ends for which it had been given. Many a grateful testimony is borne to the happy results which remained after the first fervour had passed away, how family worship was observed, prayer meetings multiplied, church attendance increased, and the whole tone of religious life was elevated.

One of the most gratifying circumstances has been the stability and permanence of the work in many of the congregations. Mr. Bain, of Chapel Garioch,* mentions that when the

* Blue Book, 1865, p. 18.

revival took place, they had seventy new communicants added to the congregation, and speaking at the distance of five years, he is able to say that there had been very little going back among them. At a recent election of elders, they required seven, and five of those chosen had been the subjects of the revival movement. Subsequently they had an election of deacons, and of the eleven elected seven were subjects of the revival. Others had become Sabbath-school teachers, and some young men were studying for the ministry. A number of persons had been reclaimed from drunkenness. One of the fruits of the revival was that "the young men had undertaken the support of a native catechist in China, and the young women the education of a girl in India." In very many districts it is believed that similar experience has been met with. Among the Sabbath-school teachers and office-bearers in many a congregation, there is a large proportion of the most zealous workers who received their first saving impression of Divine truth at the time of that memorable revival, and who have steadfastly held on their course.

The facts thus far stated will give some indication of the religious state of Scotland at the time, but they must be taken as mere examples of what was taking place in many localities, too numerous to mention. In the Assembly of 1860 a whole day was given up to the consideration of such details, and the more the subject was inquired into, it was found there was the more to tell. Summing up the result, Dr. Buchanan stated from the Moderator's chair: "Time absolutely failed for recounting the Lord's wonderful dealings in almost every part of the land. We had thought, many of us, that the whole extent of the present religious awaking was already generally known. But how striking, and how delightful, was it to find that the half had not been told. In the course of that long and most refreshing day that was occupied with this blessed subject, as one brother after another rose to address the House,* the fact became increasingly manifest that in countless districts of which no public mention had ever been previously made, the Spirit from on high had been dropping as the rain and distilling as

* Blue Book, lx. pp. 271, 272.

the dew, to refresh God's weary heritage and revive His work in the midst of the years. From East Lothian to the Outer Hebrides, from the shores of the Moray Firth to those of the Solway, and all through the great mining and manufacturing districts of the kingdom, we heard of scenes which carried us back to the days of the Lord's wonderful doings at Shotts, Stewarton, and Cambuslang." And very gratefully and joyfully were such tidings welcomed. At a great price the Free Church had sought to be found faithful in bearing her testimony for Christ, and the desire which above all else she cherished was to receive some token of His favour in the revival of her spiritual life. Many prayers had been offered, and when the blessing was actually bestowed, and sinners were turned to the Lord, and congregations were revived and quickened, men might well have their hearts filled with gratitude and their lips with praise. The Lord had done great things for us, whereof we were glad.

LXIV. Final.

In closing these Annals, we can now look back on the Disruption at the distance of forty years, and estimate in some measure its abiding influence in the Church and on the world. Our first impulse is to linger over the memories of the great leaders who wielded such influence among their brethren—men gifted with powers of intellect and eloquence which fitted them to guide the Church through her days of trial, when scenes were witnessed and deeds were done which can never be forgotten. There was Dr. Chalmers, standing out before all others a true "king of men;" and Dr. Candlish, with his brilliant intellect and fascinating powers of speech; and Dr. Cunningham, strong in the manly force of his overpowering logic; and Dr. Robert Buchanan, with his sagacious counsels and polished eloquence; and Alexander Dunlop, distinguished for his mastery of constitutional law and high-minded chivalry; and a host of others—a long list of those who stood high in the view of the Church and the country. Sometimes it seems as if it were but yesterday that they were moving and acting in the midst of us with all their commanding influence: "But our fathers, where are they, and the prophets—do they live for ever?" They served their generation according to the will of God, and with few exceptions they have gone to their rest.

The Christian who believes that God is in human history, guiding the course of events, may well see a Divine hand conspicuously manifest in the Disruption. The event was brought about by the agency of those who "meant not so, neither did their heart think so."

The Evangelical party—afterwards the Free Church—in claiming for the people a voice in the calling of their ministers, wished to do what was right, and at the same time to strengthen

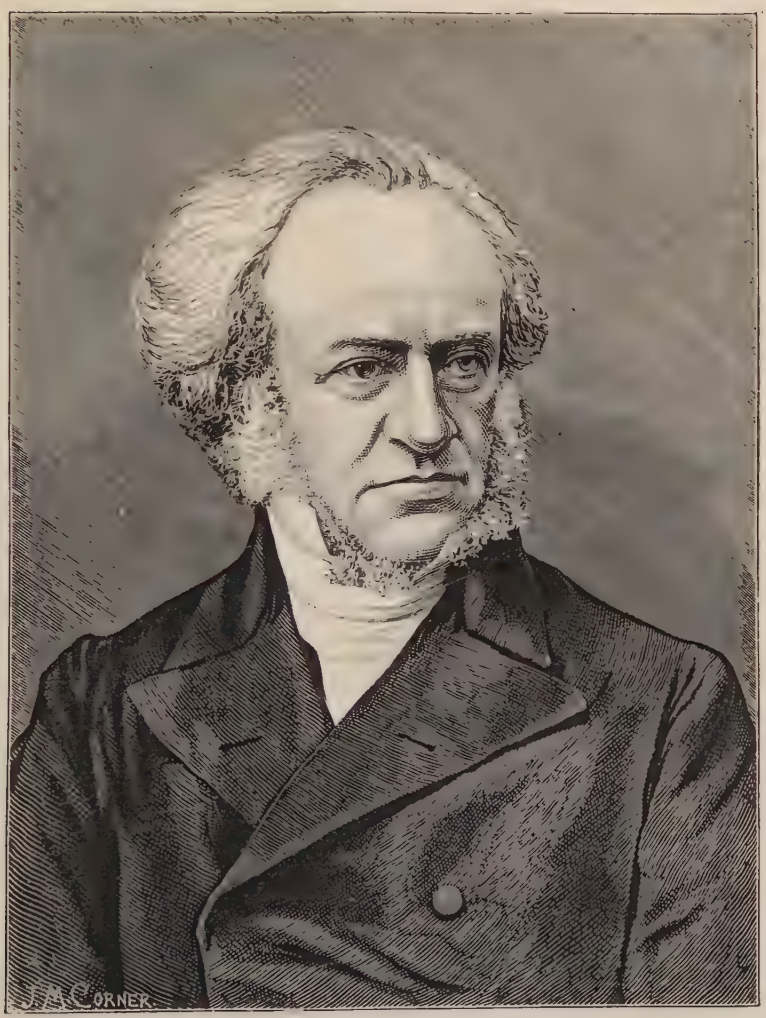
the Establishment; but the end was that they were themselves driven out, and a heavy blow inflicted on the Establishment, which they had wished to strengthen.

The Moderate party—afterwards the Establishment—wished to defend Patronage, and rather than have it limited they preferred the risk of Disruption. But that Disruption which they caused, has compelled them since to ask from Parliament the abolition of that very Patronage which they had striven at such cost to defend.

The Government of Sir Robert Peel were Conservative; but when they refused any concession—refused even a committee of inquiry—they shattered what all men knew was the most conservative institution in the country.

Thus all the different agents were led by a way which they knew not. The Disruption itself, in its providential aspects, as well as the whole train of circumstances that led to it, was evidently "the doing of the Lord." While man proposed, it was God who disposed; and if so, it is obvious that a heavy responsibility has ever since been lying on the Church, to inquire with what design God brought her into this position, and how best she is to carry out His purposes.

It is right to bear in mind that strong efforts were made by the Evangelical party to avoid the catastrophe. In 1841, for example, a movement was made in Parliament to "close the yawning breach, and avert the threatened Disruption." If the Moderate party in the Church had supported the effort of the then Duke of Argyll, it would have been successful. It fell to Dr. Candlish, in the Assembly, to speak for his side, and he bent the whole powers of his eloquence to bring about mutual concessions. If the anti-Patronage men would cease to press for anti-Patronage—and this they were willing to do,—and if the Patronage men were willing to consent to some modification in favour of the people, all parties might meet on common ground. For eight years the Moderate party had administered the Veto Law without any scruple of conscience; and would they not, he asked, unite in intimating to Parliament that it was a thing they could—for the sake of saving a Disruption—submit to, though they did not approve of it? In appealing to them with this view, Dr. Candlish



DR. CANDLISH.

broke forth into a strain of eloquence, so generous towards his opponents, so touching in its personal references, so full of noble sentiment, as he pointed to the consequences of a coming Disruption, that the whole Assembly was pervaded by a feeling of "solemnity and tenderness." "His address," says Dr. Buchanan, "shook the house as if it had been a mighty rushing wind, and for a brief interval it did seem as if it had swept all opposition before it." But such was not the will of God; no concession could be obtained, events held on their course, and the Disruption was consummated.

During these forty years since our separation from the State, many changes have taken place; but one duty is still as imperatively binding as ever on the Free Church—her testimony for Spiritual Independence—"the Crown Rights of the Redeemer"—must at all hazards be maintained and vindicated.

It is true that Patronage has been abolished in the Establishment, and this was a remarkable tribute to the power of the Free Church and her principles.

It is also true that if this, or even less than this, had been conceded at an early stage of the conflict, it would have prevented the Disruption, because the constitution of the Established Church had not then been fixed on an Erastian basis.

But it is equally true that as things now are, the Free Church must stand by her principles, and uphold her testimony for the Headship of Christ.

As to the Act by which Parliament abolished Patronage, we have the conclusive evidence of the Duke of Argyll, and other leading promoters of the measure, that it did not concede the Free Church principle of spiritual independence, and was never meant to concede it. It may be enough if on this point we add the well-weighed opinion of Lord Ardmillan, who belonged to the Free Church, but who writes in no partisan spirit—his feelings towards all that is good in the Establishment being of the most cordial nature. "It is alike," he says, "the part of wisdom and of duty, to hold fast the principles vindicated at such cost in the Disruption, and to maintain the position of Nonconformity; for that is our true position, since Nonconformists all Free Churchmen became when they quitted the Establishment

in 1843. The recent alteration in the law of Patronage does not affect our position. It may or may not be satisfactory to the Established Church. Of course we cannot approve of Patronage. We have never done so. It was not in the Evangelical party that Patronage found support, nor can it find support in the Free Church. But the new statute, whatever it does, does not remove the causes of separation; it does not secure, and was not intended to secure, the spiritual independence of the Church; and after thirty years' experience of Disruption life, all thoughtful Free Churchmen must have been taught that Evangelical Nonconformity has in it a charm and a power which the State cannot bestow, and must have been taught also that the Church is freer, safer, and purer when depending only on the free-will offerings of the Christian people."*

This is the duty, then, which lies on the Free Church, in the Providence of God; the great principle for which she made the sacrifice of 1843 must be maintained. It has, indeed, the most sacred hereditary claims on her loyal support. "Among the first words," says the Rev. Andrew Gray, † "uttered by our Church, when she awoke out of Popery three centuries ago, that testimony was claimed as her own. To the Parliament of the kingdom, and in the hearing of Christendom, she said: 'We confess and avow Christ Jesus to be the only Head of His Kirk, our just Lawgiver, our only High Priest, Advocate, and Mediator; in which honours and offices, if man or angel presume to intrude themselves, we utterly detest them as blasphemous to our Sovereign and Supreme Governor, Christ Jesus.' Thus spake the Scottish Church by the mouth of John Knox, and while yet in her cradle. Providence must have guided her words. They announced her peculiar vocation from God, and presented an epitome of her history from that day to this. She did not forget the lesson her lisping tongue had learned. 'The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King,' formed her watchword from generation to generation. In courts, in prison, on the scaffold, at the stake, she cried: 'The Pope is not our head, the prince is not our

* Disruption Worthies, Introd. p. 20. † Blue Book, 1848.

head, our only Head is Christ.' To the Church of England, to the Church of Holland, to the Huguenots of France, to the Protestants of Germany, the language of her struggles and manifold sufferings was: 'Give not the things of God unto Cæsar, nor the prerogatives of Christ to the civil magistrate; let kings be your nursing fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers, but let Christ alone be your Lawgiver and Head.' It is no light matter to inherit such a testimony—a testimony in itself so great, and that was so maintained. Especially is it no light matter to have such a testimony committed to us at a time like this. Everywhere, both at home and abroad, the Churches of Christ are astir, and looking into their constitutional foundations. All over Europe the relation between Church and State as it has existed for centuries is becoming unsettled, and the servants and people of God are daily growing more free and willing to consider what the true and proper relation is. The Churches to which the Scottish testimony has made its appeal so long, are now at last in a favourable condition for listening to it. Who knows but that God had an eye to this crisis when he raised up the Church of Scotland, and appointed both her recent baptism of tears, and her former baptisms of tears and of blood. Let us then, through the grace of God, keep our banner aloft, that it may be seen from afar on these Scottish hills, among which martyrs used to dwell, drawing hope and confidence from the cross of Christ; let us hold forth with one heart and soul the testimony for His crown!"

But while this is a duty imperatively demanded, it would be an evil day for the Free Church if her strength were chiefly given to such contendings. While our people should know the principles of their Church, and be able on fitting occasions to render a reason, yet a Church has other work to do, and in looking forward to the future, we may be allowed to cherish the hope that all the sections of our divided Presbyterianism in Scotland may yet be gathered into one. It may even be that the Disruption of 1843, in the mysterious Providence of God, may be designed to prepare the way for such a result.

Already, as we have seen, three unions have taken place on the ground of these common principles. The original Synods

of both branches of the Secession, and the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, have made common cause with the Free Church. But apart from such ecclesiastical movements, the tendency of events in Scotland, ever since the Disruption, has been step by step to place all different Churches on the same level.

Within two years after 1843, a change was made in the administration of the poor-law, by which the Established Church lost much of the influential position she formerly held.

Another change was the abolition of the tests by which all University Professors were bound to attach themselves to the Established Church. What brought the question into prominence was an attempt to expel Sir David Brewster from the office of Principal in the University of St. Andrews. He was the leading man of science of his day in Scotland; but no sooner had he joined the Free Church than the Presbytery rose in arms, and took action, on the 6th of June, within less than a fortnight after the first Free Assembly. The most eminent advocates were engaged, and a remarkable correspondence took place* between the Presbytery and one of their counsel, Mr. Inglis, now Lord Justice-General, whose opinion was adverse to the proposed prosecution. The Presbytery were resolute, however. After "a long and anxious conversation with Dr. Cook," they wrote that they had come to the resolution to libel Sir David Brewster. It was a question "involving, as we think, the very existence of the Establishment." They were ultimately persuaded—not without difficulty—to refrain from prosecuting the case.

Other cases occurred; public attention was called to the whole subject, and by Act of Parliament the Professors, other than those in the Faculty of Divinity, were set free, the Established Church losing the jurisdiction she claimed.

A still more serious change was made in regard to the parochial schools. We have seen with what relentless severity all teachers adhering to the Free Church were expelled, and how our great scheme of education was set up. But soon the

* Jurisdiction of the Church over Universities, &c. &c. Edinburgh: Macphail. 1844.

need of a national system became apparent. The Free Church threw her influence into the scale; the public took the matter into their own hands, the present School Boards were set up, and the exclusive control of the Established Church came to an end.

In these different changes something was due to the effect of the Disruption. In connection with such national questions, the position of the Establishment had become untenable. It was one thing to claim exclusive control in the days when nearly the whole population belonged to a Church truly national, but it was different when a majority of the people were outside its pale. Step by step the course of events has been moving in the direction of religious equality.

The Disruption, whose history we have endeavoured to trace, has, it is obvious, left behind it many important lessons which well deserve the careful consideration of every thoughtful mind.

The simple duty of faith in God, for example, was enforced in a way that was very memorable. Often in the midst of the conflict the path of duty was dark. The world was full of scornful mockery as to the folly of expecting that churches could be built, and incomes provided for the outgoing ministers; and many a time, in our secret minds, we were inclined to agree with the world that it was all very hopeless. The only thing clear was that we must "do the right." In mercy there was grace given for the day of trial; and now, in looking back, the Free Church has simply to tell of the faithfulness of a faithful God. This, then, is one message which, in the most emphatic way, the Disruption brings to all men of all Churches,—that, if only they walk in the path of duty, they will not be forsaken. Many a time, in the midst of these Disruption experiences, men's hearts have overflowed with gratitude as they were able to set up their Ebenezer and say, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us."

But there was one subject on which the Disruption cast most unexpected light—the power inherent in the Christian Church to sustain by her own free-will offerings all the ordinances of religion. When the money was seen at first pouring into the treasury, we were often like men who dreamed. Worldly

men outside the Church wondered what it could mean. Even Christian men in some cases were incredulous. Dr. Duff tells of an Episcopalian congregation in England, fifteen hundred strong, who used to welcome the annual deputation of the Church Missionary Society, and after two or three sermons had been preached, they were accustomed to announce that the "handsome"—sometimes they said "munificent"—collection of six or seven pounds had been made.* When some of these "rich folks" were shown the announcement that £750 had been got at a collection in Dr. Miller's church, Glasgow, they refused to believe it; there must be a figure too many—it must be £75, or £50, and even that seemed to them incredible. Both in, and out of the Establishment, men had the most inadequate ideas of how much they were bound to give for the cause of Christ. The fountains of Christian liberality needed to be broken up, and in the Providence of God this was what the Disruption was sent to do. Under the quickening power of the Spirit of God, men's hearts were enlarged, and they began to give of their substance as they never gave before.

The first outburst of this liberality was wonderful; but more wonderful is the fact, that it proved to be no temporary convulsive effort. Continuously flowing with steady current for forty years, the liberality of the people has placed an amount of wealth at the disposal of our Church greater than that which she possessed while within the Establishment. At first men gave largely, in 1843, under the generous impulse of the Disruption; but the impulse has become a habit. Referring to the Sustentation Fund, Dr. Buchanan said: "The revenues of the Crown do not come into the nation's treasury with greater steadiness and regularity than does this Fund of ours." To many it has come as a new discovery—this power of Christian principle to call forth the continuous liberality of the people; and surely it is no small service which the Disruption has thus rendered: rousing the latent power of our own congregations and reacting on others, it has influenced the whole Christianity of Scotland, bringing home to all the members of all the Churches the duty and privilege of

* Life, vol. ii. p. 195.

contributing of their substance to the cause of Christ. Comparing the scale of giving before the Disruption with that which has prevailed since, it is hardly too much to say that it has effected a revolution in the finances, not of the Free Church alone, but of other Churches also. It is not meant that the Free Church has reached the full standard of giving. There are latent powers yet waiting to be developed, but there has been enough of self-sacrificing, generous liberality to make the scale of her contributions to be spoken of throughout the world.

In these Annals it has been our part to describe the past and not to forecast the future. As years pass on, every new generation has its own peculiarities; new advantages are enjoyed, new temptations and dangers must be encountered, and in the face of these the Church must do her great work for God and man. But in the midst of all changes, the Church of the future, we may feel assured, will find her safety and her success just where she has found it in the past.

Nothing can be more certain than that the strength of the Church in Disruption days lay in the full and faithful preaching of the Gospel of God's grace. In all its length and breadth our ministers rejoiced to set forth God's truth in regard to sin on the one hand and salvation through Christ on the other, and the work of the Spirit on the souls of men.

But along with this there was, as these Annals have abundantly shown, an awakening of religious life and zeal which made itself everywhere felt. It was there in the sphere of religious effort that the effect of the Disruption was specially seen—the new life thrown into every department of Christian work. It has been our object in these pages to show how far this was realised—how men who had been noted before for faith and zeal toiled as they never toiled before, and how their hearts were often cheered by the blessing which rested on their labours.

It was this that in a great measure won for the Free Church her position in the land—this enthusiastic devotedness and unhesitating self-sacrifice. Her struggles and her testimony for the Headship of Christ had been much, but her zeal for the con-

version of souls was more. The evangelical fervour of the Church's best days seemed in some good measure restored, and while sinners were saved and saints were refreshed, men thanked God and took courage.

It should never be forgotten that the measure of the Church's success is not the amount of her contributions, nor the number of her members, but the degree of progress she is making in winning souls and subduing the world for Christ. It is by the faithful preaching of the Gospel, and by the presence of a living Saviour, visible in the midst of her, that this is to be done. If the Church is to gain over the world, men must recognise her faith and zeal and self-sacrificing love, and in these trace the evidences of Christ's abiding presence with her as her living Head. In Disruption times this was what men lived and prayed for, and they did not pray in vain. May a yet larger share of the same spirit be given to our Church in days to come, and may generation after generation of her faithful sons be heard, as in days past, pouring forth their hearts in the devout and hallowed aspiration :—

"Now for my friends' and brethren's sakes,
Peace be in thee, I'll say,
And for the house of God our Lord
I'll seek thy good alway."

APPENDIX I.

DISRUPTION MINISTERS, SURVIVING AND DECEASED.

LIST OF MINISTERS WHO LEFT THE SCOTTISH ESTABLISHMENT IN 1843, SHOWING THE NAMES OF THE DECEASED AND OF THE SURVIVORS AS AT

1st MARCH, 1890.

THE LIST IS MARKED BY A DOUBLE SERIES OF NUMBERS IN ORDER TO DISTINGUISH THE TWO CLASSES.

NOTE.—*Care has been taken to ensure accuracy so far as the information in possession of the Church would allow. Should any of the numerous details be found defective, the Convener invites additional communications.*

*** *In regard to the names marked with an asterisk, recent information is awanting.*

Name.	*Place.*	*Removed to*	*Date of Ordination.*		
I. SYNOD OF LOTHIAN AND TWEEDDALE.					
1. PRESBYTERY OF EDINBURGH.					
1. Geo. R. Davidson, D.D.,	Lady Glenorchy's,		1828		
2. Robert Elder, D.D.,	St. Paul's,	Rothesay,	1831		
3. David Thorburn, D.D.,	South Leith,		1833		
4. A. M. Stuart, D.D.,	St. Luke's,		1837		
5. Alex. W. Brown,	St. Bernard's,	resigned,	1841		
6. Thomas Addis, D.D.,	Morningside,		1841		
1. David Welsh, D.D.,	Professor,		1820	Died 24th April,	1845
2. Geo. Muirhead, D.D.,	Cramond,		1788	" 5th April,	1847
3. Thos. Chalmers, D.D.,	Principal,		1803	" 31st May,	1847
4. Robert Gordon, D.D.,	High Church,		1816	" 22nd Oct.,	1853
5. John Glen,	Portobello,		1818	" 7th Nov.,	1854
6. John Sym,	Greyfriars,		1833	" 28th Jan.,	1855
7. Walter Fairlie,	Gilmerton,		1819	" 25th Nov.,	1856

	Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.		
8.	William Simpson,	Leith Wynd,		1813	Died 4th Jan.,	1858
9.	Henry Grey, D.D.,	St. Mary's,		1801	" 14th Jan.,	1859
10.	W. Cunningham, D.D.,	Trinity Church,	Principal,	1830	" 4th Dec.,	1861
11.	Wm. K. Tweedie, D.D.,	Tolbooth,		1832	" 24th March,	1863
12.	James Noble,	Gaelic,	Poolewe,	1839	" 20th Oct.,	1864
13.	Robert Ferguson, M.A.,	St. David's,		1836	" 18th Dec.,	1866
14.	Patrick Clason, D.D.,	Buccleuch,		1815	" 30th July,	1867
15.	William Nisbet,	John Knox's,		1834	" 27th Sept.,	1869
16.	Jas. Buchanan, D.D.,	High Church,	Professor,	1828	" 19th April,	1870
17.	Andrew Mackenzie,	Henderson Ch.,	Penicuik,	1831	" 4th March,	1871
18.	James Lewis, D.D.,	St. John's, Leith,	Rome,	1832	" 29th Jan.,	1872
19.	Thos. Guthrie, D.D.,	St. John's,		1830	" 24th Feb.,	1873
20.	R. S. Candlish, D.D.,	St. George's,		1834	" 19th Oct.,	1873
21.	J. Julius Wood, D.D.,	New Greyfriars,	Dumfries,	1827	" 23rd March,	1877
22.	James Fairbairn, D.D.,	Newhaven,		1838	" 3rd Jan.,	1879
23.	John Bruce, D.D.,	St. Andrew's,		1818	" 4th Aug.,	1880
24.	John Thomson, M.A.,	St. Ninian's,		1840	" 19th Nov.,	1881
25.	James Begg, D.D.,	Liberton,	Newington,	1830	" 29th Sept.,	1883
26.	Charles J. Brown, D.D.,	New North,		1831	" 3rd July,	1884
27.	Alexander Gregory,	Roxburgh,	Anstruther,	1842	" 17th July,	1888
28.	James Manson,	Dean,	Duns—retd.,	1842	" 21st Feb.,	1890

2. Presbytery of Linlithgow.

29.	Samuel Martin,	Bathgate,		1825	Died 15th May,	1850
30.	W.M.Hetherington, D.D.,	Torphichen,	Professor,	1836	" — May,	1865
31.	Thomas Gordon,	Falkirk,		1819	" 22nd July,	1869
32.	Lewis H. Irving,	Abercorn,	Falkirk,	1831	" 28th June,	1877
33.	John Laing,	Livingstone,		1842	" 3rd April,	1880

3. Presbytery of Biggar and Peebles.

34.	Jas. Somerville, D.D.,	Drumelzier,		1799	Died 8th May,	1844
35.	Walter Paterson,	Kirkurd,		1837	" 22nd June,	1849
36.	George Burns, D.D.,	Tweedsmuir,	Corstorphine,	1816	" 5th Feb.,	1876
37.	James Proudfoot,	Culter,		1827	" 15th Nov.,	1876
38.	Wm. Hanna, D.D.,	Skirling,	Edinburgh,	1835	" 24th May,	1882

4. Presbytery of Dalkeith.

39.	Thomas Pitcairn,	Cockpen,		1833	Died 21st Dec.,	1854
40.	James Monteith,	Dalkeith,	Ascog,	1832	" 20th April,	1856
41.	Jas. Bannerman, D.D.,	Ormiston,	Professor,	1833	" 27th March,	1868
42.	David Brown,	Roslin,		1829	" 3rd March,	1870
43.	Robert Court,	Heriot,		1831	" 27th May,	1870

Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.	
5. Presbytery of Haddington and Dunbar.				
7. John Ainslie, D.D.,	Dirleton,	St. Andrews,	1835	
44. John Abernethy, M.A.,	Bolton,		1816	Died 5th July, 1843
45. Andrew Baird,	Cockburnspath,		1831	" 22nd June, 1845
46. Robert Lorimer, LL.D.,	Haddington,		1793	" 9th Nov., 1848
47. Selby O. Dodds,	Garvald,		1839	" 22nd Jan., 1856
48. Angus Makellar, D.D.,	Pencaitland,		1812	" 10th May, 1859
49. William Sorley,	Bellhaven,	Selkirk,	1840	" 4th Oct., 1859
50. Adam Forman, M.A.,	Innerwick,	Leven,	1824	" 29th March, 1865
51. Archibald Lorimer,	Cockenzie,		1838	" 23rd Dec., 1869
52. T. W. Wright,	Haddington,		1839	" 23rd July, 1872
53. Pat. Fairbairn, D.D.,	Saltoun,	Principal,	1830	" 6th Aug., 1875
54. W. B. Cunningham,	Prestonpans,		1833	" 2nd Aug., 1878
55. John Thomson, D.D.,	Yester,	Paisley,	1834	" 6th Aug., 1883
56. James Dodds,	Humbie,	Dunbar,	1841	" 3rd Sept., 1885
57. John Thomson,	Prestonkirk,		1831	" 12th July, 1889

II. SYNOD OF MERSE AND TEVIOTDALE.

6. Presbytery of Duns and Chirnside.				
8. G. F. Knight, M.A.,	Mordington,	Wemyss,	1832	
9. John Fairbairn,	Greenlaw,		1833	
10. John Baillie,	Fogo,	England,	1841	
58. John Brown, D.D.,	Langton,		1805	Died 25th June, 1848
59. Archd. M'Conechy,	Bunkle,	deposed,	1819	" 22nd Sept., 1853
60. John Wallace,	Ab. St. Bathan's,		1823	" 2nd Nov., 1866
61. Robert Cowe, M.A.,	Whitsome,	Glasgow,	1832	" 25th Oct., 1867
62. John Turnbull,	Eyemouth,		1822	" 3rd March, 1870
63. William Cousin,	Duns,	Melrose,	1840	" 1st Aug., 1883
7. Presbytery of Kelso and Lauder.				
64. George Craig,	Sprouston,		1835	Died 10th Feb., 1866
65. Walter Wood, M.A.,	Westruther,	Elie,	1838	" 6th March, 1882
66. Horatius Bonar, D.D.,	Kelso,	Edinburgh,	1837	" 21st July, 1889
8. Presbytery of Jedburgh.				
67. John A. Wallace,	Hawick,		1827	Died 9th Feb., 1870
68. Andrew Milroy,	Cramng,	Edinburgh,	1829	" 3rd May, 1873
69. John Purves, D.D.,	Jedburgh,		1830	" 18th Oct., 1877
9. Presbytery of Selkirk.				
70. Thomas Jolly,	Bowden,		1829	Died 30th May, 1859
71. John Edmondston,	Ashkirk,		1837	" 8th Dec., 1865
72. W. Falconer,	Ladhope,	Ferry-Port-on-Craig,	1839	" 9th July, 1886

	Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.		
	III. SYNOD OF DUMFRIES.					
	10. Presbytery of Lockerby.					
11.	W. Brown Clark, D.D.,	Half-Morton,	Quebec,	1839		
73.	G. Hastie,	K'pat'k-Fleming,		1834	Died 2nd Nov.,	1856
74.	D. B. Douie, M.A.,	Dryfesdale,	Largs,	1831	" ——	1863-4
75.	E. M'Bride Broun,	Brydekirk,	Lochmaben,	1836	" 30th Sept.,	1866
	11. Presbytery of Dumfries.					
76.	Henry Duncan, D.D.,	Ruthwell,		1799	Died 12th Feb.,	1846
77.	Robert Crawford,	K'pat'k-Irongray,		1832	" 7th Aug.,	1856
78.	Robert Brydon, D.D.,	Dunscore,		1822	" 26th Aug.,	1860
79.	George J. Duncan,	K'pat'k-Durham,	London,	1832	" 31st Dec.,	1868
80.	James Mackenzie, M.A.,	Dalbeattie,	Dunfermline,	1843	" 10th June,	1869
81.	J. R. Mackenzie, D.D.,	Dumfries,	Birmingham,	1841	" 3rd March,	1877
82.	Robert Kinnear,	Torthorwald,	Moffat,	1841	" 10th July,	1883
	12. Presbytery of Penpont.					
12.	Patrick Borrowman,	Glencairn,		1837		
83.	Thomas Hastings,	Wanlockhead,		1834	Died 30th April,	1875
	IV. SYNOD OF GALLOWAY.					
	13. Presbytery of Stranraer.					
13.	Andrew Urquhart,	Portpatrick,		1832		
84.	Robert M'Neill,	Stoneykirk,		1840	Died 6th Aug.,	1852
85.	John Lamb,	Kirkmaiden,		1826	" 2nd Jan.,	1865
86.	T. B. Bell,	Leswalt,		1841	" 10th Dec.,	1866
87.	Robert Donald,	Sheuchan,	retired,	1842	" 19th Aug.,	1877
	14. Presbytery of Wigtown.					
88.	A. Forrester,	Sorby,	Halifax,	1835	Died 19th April,	1869
	15. Presbytery of Kirkcudbright.					
89.	Robert Jeffray,	Girthon,		1818	Died 9th March,	1844
90.	Samuel Smith,	Borgue,	demitted,	1834	" 22nd June,	1868
91.	John Macmillan, D.D.,	Kirkcudbright,		1837	" 29th Nov.,	1876
	V. SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.					
	16. Presbytery of Ayr.					
14.	W. Chalmers, D.D.,	Dailly,	London,	1836		
92.	Matthew Kirkland,	New Cumnock,		1835	Died 27th July,	1846
93.	James Stevenson,	Newton-on-Ayr,		1836	" 30th Sept.,	1865
94.	E. B. Wallace,	Barr,		1819	" 5th June,	1867

	Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.		
95.	Andrew Thomson,	Maybole,		1840	Died ——	1869
96.	Ninian Bannatyne,	Old Cumnock,		1830	" 20th Feb.,	1874
97.	Thomas Burns,	Monkton,	Dunedin,	1826	" 23rd Jan.,	1871
98.	William Hutchison,	Catrine,	Johnstone,	1836	" 25th March,	1876
99.	William Grant,	Ayr,		1843	" 2nd Nov.,	1876
100.	John Spiers,	Patna,	Kinglassie,	1841	" 8th Feb.,	1878
101.	George Orr,	Symington,	retired,	1840	" 15th July,	1882

17. Presbytery of Irvine.

15.	Neil Brodie,	Kilmarnock,	P'ckshaws,	1842		
102.	John Hamilton,	Saltcoats,	Lochranza,	1838	Died 30th May,	1847
103.	Peter Campbell,	Kilmarnock,		1815	" 19th March,	1850
104.	D. Landsborough, D.D.,	Stevenston,		1811	" 12th Sept.,	1854
105.	Matthew Dickie,	Dunlop,	Beith,	1828	" 28th Sept.,	1863
106.	Thomas Findlay,	West Kilbride,		1832	" 13th June,	1875
107.	David Wilson,	Fullarton,		1837	" 8th March,	1881
108.	Thomas Main, D.D.,	Kilmarnock,	Edinburgh,	1839	" 28th May,	1881
109.	David Arthur,	Stewarton,	Belize—retd.,	1842	" 18th March,	1888

18. Presbytery of Paisley.

110.	George Logan, M.A.,	Eastwood,		1785	Died 2nd July,	1843
111.	W. Scott Hay,	Bridge-of-Weir,		1821	" 15th Dec.,	1851
112.	D. Macfarlane, D.D.,	Renfrew,		1827	" 30th April,	1853
113.	James Falconer,	Paisley,	Canada,	1837	" ——	1856
114.	Peter Henderson,	Paisley,		1841	" 27th Sept.,	1861
115.	Robert Smith, D.D.,	Lochwinnoch,		1815	" 22nd Jan.,	1865
116.	Robert Burns, D.D.,	Paisley,	Canada,	1811	" 19th Aug.,	1869
117.	John Campbell,	Paisley,	Tarbert,	1833	" 17th Sept.,	1874
118.	*Alexander Salmon,	Barrhead,	Sydney,	1836		
119.	J. M'Naughton, D.D.,	Paisley,	Belfast,	1831	" 27th May,	1884

19. Presbytery of Greenock.

16.	John J. Bonar, D.D.,	St. Andrew's Ch.,		1835		
17.	William Laughton, D.D.,	St. Thomas',		1839		
120.	Angus Macbean, M.A.,	South Church,		1821	Died 24th Dec.,	1845
121.	Pat. M'Farlan, D.D.,	West Church,		1806	" 13th Nov.,	1849
122.	James Morison,	Port-Glasgow,		1842	" 22nd Sept.,	1852
123.	James Drummond,	Cumbrae,		1830	" 28th Jan.,	1862
124.	John Dow,	Largs,		1831	" 6th Oct.,	1865
125.	Donald Macleod,	Gourock,		1831	" ——	1868
126.	John Gemmel, D.D.,	Fairlie,		1835	" 25th March,	1884
127.	James Smith, M.A.,	Middle Church,		1824	" 5th March,	1886
128.	R. W. Stewart, D.D.,	Erskine,	Leghorn,	1837	" 23rd Nov.,	1887
129.	James Stark,	Cartsdyke,		1834	" 5th Jan.,	1890

	Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.		
			20. Presbytery of Hamilton.			
18.	David Paton,	Chapelton,	Fettercairn,	1841		
19.	Alexander Rankine,	East Strathaven,		1842		
130.	Robert Stirrat,	Airdrie,	Edinburgh,	1843	Died 16th Jan.,	1852
131.	James Clason,	Dalziel,		1808	" 16th April,	1852
132.	James Anderson,	Blantyre,		1832	" 7th May,	1860
133.	William Buchan,	Hamilton,		1831	" 21st June,	1869
134.	William Jackson,	Airdrie,		1835	" 8th Aug.,	1869
135.	James Findlay,	Broomknoll,	Glasgow,	1835	" 24th July,	1881
136.	Sir H. W. Moncreiff, D.D., Bart.,	East Kilbride,	Edinburgh,	1836	" 4th Nov.,	1883
			21. Presbytery of Lanark.			
137.	William Logan,	Lesmahagow,	Sanquhar,	1820	Died 2nd Feb.,	1863
138.	A. Borland Parker, D.D.,	Lesmahagow,	Glasgow,	1836	" 4th April,	1867
139.	Thomas Stark,	Lanark,		1841	" 2nd Dec.,	1869
			22. Presbytery of Dumbarton.			
20.	William Alexander,	Duntocher,		1838		
140.	John Pollock, M.A.,	Baldernock,		1836	Died 20th Dec.,	1855
141.	James Smith,	Dumbarton,		1839	" 1st Nov.,	1862
142.	Matthew Barclay, D.D.,	Old Kilpatrick,		1833	" 22nd Jan.,	1865
143.	John Anderson,	Helensburgh,		1827	" 9th Jan.,	1867
			23. Presbytery of Glasgow.			
21.	John Thomson,	Shettleston,	Aberdeen,	1829		
22.	Alexander Wilson,	Bridgeton,		1841		
23.	Robert Reid,	Chalmers,	Banch'y-T'n,	1842		
144.	Adam Forman,	Kirkintilloch,		1792	Died ——	1843
145.	Joseph Somerville,	St. Thomas's,		1823	" 17th Dec.,	1844
146.	Thomas Brown, D.D.,	St. John's,		1807	" 23rd Jan.,	1847
147.	Jonathan R. Anderson,	Knox's Church,		1834	" 10th Jan.,	1859
148.	William Burns, D.D.,	Kilsyth,		1800	" 8th May,	1859
149.	Peter Currie,	Stockwell,		1820	" 30th Sept.,	1859
150.	John Smyth, D.D.,	St. George's,		1823	" 21st Oct.,	1860
151.	Thomas Duncan,	Kirkintilloch,	Newcastle,	1838	" 18th Dec.,	1861
152.	J. G. Lorimer, LL.D.,	St. David's,		1829	" 9th Oct.,	1868
153.	John Cochrane,	Cumbernauld,	Gr'gemouth,	1827	" 19th Jan.,	1869
154.	Nath. Paterson, D.D.,	St. Andrew's,		1821	" 25th April,	1871
155.	James Gibson, D.D.,	Kingston,	Professor,	1835	" 2nd Nov.,	1871
156.	Hugh Mackay,	Milton,	Kilmun,	1842	" 30th June,	1873
157.	R. M'Nair Wilson,	Maryhill,		1826	" 3rd April,	1874
158.	A. King, D.D.,	St. Stephen's,		1830	" ——	1874
159.	Jas. Henderson, D.D.,	St. Enoch's,		1821	" 12th Sept.,	1874
160.	John Forbes, D.D.,	St. Paul's,		1826	" 25th Dec.,	1874
161.	Robt. Buchanan, D.D.,	Tron Church,		1827	" 31st March,	1875

	Name.	*Place.*	*Removed to*	*Date of Ordination.*			
162.	William Arnot,	St. Peter's,	Edinburgh,	1839	Died	3rd June,	1875
163.	James M'Kinlay,	Wellpark,		1842	"	16th June,	1876
164.	David Menzies,	Martyrs',		1839	"	10th June,	1877
165.	Michael Willis, D.D.,	Renfield,	Toronto,	1821	"	19th Aug.,	1879
166.	W. M'Gilvray, D.D.,	Hope Street,	Aberdeen,	1835	"	30th June,	1880
167.	James Munro,	Rutherglen,		1836	"	8th Nov.,	1884
168.	A. S. Paterson, D.D.,	Hutchesontown,		1837	"	28th Jan.,	1885
169.	John Lyon,	Kilsyth,	Bro'ty-Ferry,	1840	"	31st March,	1889
170.	A. N. Somerville, D.D.,	Anderston Ch.,		1837	"	18th Sept.,	1889
171.	James Macbeth,	Lauriston,	deposed,	1837	"	——	

VI. SYNOD OF ARGYLL.

24. Presbytery of Dunoon and Inveraray.

172.	John Macpherson,	Rothesay,		1837	Died	16th Sept.,	1843
173.	Peter M'Bride,	Rothesay,		1825	"	2nd Oct.,	1846
174.	Duncan M'Lean,	Kilmodan,	Callander,	1836	"	14th June,	1858
175.	Robert Craig, M.A.	Rothesay,		1829	"	26th May,	1860
176.	M. Mackay, LL.D.,	Dunoon,	Tarbert,	1825	"	17th May,	1873
177.	Alexander M'Bride,	North Bute,		1835	"	28th April,	1875
178.	Joseph Stark, M.A.,	Kilfinan,		1832	"	24th Aug.,	1877

25. Presbytery of Kintyre.

179.	Angus Macmillan,	Kilmorie,		1822	Died	1st Oct.,	1843
180.	Duncan M'Nab,	Campbeltown,	Glasgow,	1839	"	12th June,	1863
181.	Hector M'Neill,	Campbeltown,		1835	"	3rd Aug.,	1879

26. Presbytery of Islay.

182.	Alex. Cameron,	Kilchoman,		1819	Died	30th April,	1872
183.	James Pearson,	Kilarrow,		1829	"	19th Jan.,	1883

27. Presbytery of Lorn and Mull.

184.	Finlay M'Pherson,	Kilbrandon,		1833	Died	2nd Jan.,	1852
185.	Archibald Bannatyne,	Oban,		1842	"	18th May,	1863
186.	Hugh Fraser, M.A.,	Ardchattan,		1807	"	6th Oct.,	1865
187.	Duncan M'Lean,	Glenorchy,		1835	"	26th Sept.,	1871
188.	William Fraser,	Kilchrenan,	Australia,	1827	"	——	1874
189.	Archibald Nicholl,	Coll,	Shiskan,	1836	"	11th Dec.,	1876
190.	Duncan M'Vean,	Iona,		1835	"	16th Jan.,	1880

Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.		
VII. SYNOD OF PERTH AND STIRLING.					
28. Presbytery of Stirling.					
24. Alexander Beith, D.D.,	Stirling,		1822		
25. John Wright,	Alloa,		1830		
191. Chris. Greigg, M.A.,	St. Ninian's,		1800	Died 11th April,	1844
192. George Cupples,	Stirling,	Doune,	1812	" 1st May,	1850
193. John Dempster,	Denny,		1800	" 18th May,	1855
194. John Bonar, D.D.,	Larbert,	Glasgow,	1826	" 20th Dec.,	1863
195. Ebenezer Johnstone,	Plean,		1839	" 3rd Feb.,	1864
196. Alexander Leitch, M.A.,	Stirling,		1825	" 17th April,	1868
197. William Mackray, M.A.,	Stirling,	Huntly,	1824	" 25th June,	1870
198. John Harper,	Bannockburn,	Bothwell,	1839	" 17th Oct.,	1875
29. Presbytery of Dunblane.					
23. William Watt,	Bucklyvie,	Norrieston,	1837		
199. William Anderson,	Kippen,		1811	Died 27th March,	1845
200. Henry Anderson,	Tillicoultry,		1808	" 12th Aug.,	1845
201. David Black,	Gartmore,	Tillicoultry.	1839	" 14th June,	1878
202. Thomas Hislop,	Doune,		1816	" 9th Sept.,	1879
203. James Duncan,	Kincardine East,	Temple,	1826	" 11th Dec.,	1879
204. W. Mackenzie,	Dunblane,	Australia,	1829	" 10th March,	1882
30. Presbytery of Dunkeld.					
27. William Grant, M.A.,	Tenandry,	Colonies,	1836		
205. Andrew Kessen,	Lethendy,		1838	Died 14th Feb.,	1856
206. Francis Gillies,	Rattray,	Edinburgh,	1837	" 11th Jan.,	1862
207. Michael Stirling,	Cargill,		1808	" 11th March,	1865
208. George Millar,	Clunie,		1836	" 24th Dec.,	1869
209. John Mackenzie,	Dunkeld,	Ratho,	1839	" 25th May,	1878
210. John Waddell,	Burrelton,	deposed,	1825	"	——
31. Presbytery of Breadalbane.					
211. John Logan,	Lawers,	Glasgow,	1843	Died 16th April,	1871
212. Donald Mackenzie,	Ardeonaig,		1837	" 10th Oct.,	1873
213. Alex. Stewart, M.A.,	Killin,		1839	" 30th Aug.,	1883
214. Alexander Mackinnon,	Strathfillan,		1840	" 23rd May,	1884
32. Presbytery of Perth.					
28. A. A. Bonar, D.D.,	Collace,	Glasgow,	1838		
215. Charles Stewart,	St. Stephen's,	Kirkmichael,	1838	Died 1st July,	1852
216. James M'Lagan, D.D.,	Kinfauns,	Professor,	1821	" 29th Oct.,	1852
217. Andrew Gray, M.A.,	Perth,		1832	" 10th March,	1861
218. Wm. Thomson, D.D.,	Perth,		1801	" 17th March,	1863

	Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.		
219.	John A. Thomson,	Moneydie,		1828	Died 1st Oct.,	1864
220.	John Milne,	Perth,	Calcutta,	1839	" 31st May,	1868
221.	J. Grierson, D.D.,	Errol,		1819	" 22nd Jan.,	1875
222.	C. C. Stewart,	Aberdalgie,	Scone,	1832	" 30th Dec.,	1876
223.	William Mather,	Stanley,		1832	" 25th Sept.,	1877
224.	John Walker,	Perth,	retired,	1842	" 9th July,	1880
225.	Alex. Cumming,	Dunbarny,	Glasgow,	1834	" 15th Dec.,	1880
226.	James Drummond,	Forgandenny,		1828	" 14th Sept.,	1885

33. Presbytery of Auchterarder.

29.	J. Reid Omond, D.D.,	Monzie,		1836		
227.	Samuel Grant,	Ardoch,	Bon-Accord,	1840	Died 14th Jan.,	1853
228.	Finlay Macalister,	Crieff,		1839	" 22nd June,	1866
229.	James Thomson,	Muckart,		1832	" 23rd Dec.,	1871
230.	James Carment,	Comrie,		1841	" 29th Jan.,	1880
231.	John Ferguson,	Monzievaird,	B. of Allan,	1835	" 30th May,	1881
232.	Andrew Noble, M.A.,	Blairingone,	London,	1841	" 12th Jan.,	1882

VIII. SYNOD OF FIFE.

34. Presbytery of Dunfermline.

233.	John Balfour,	Culross,		1816	Died 21st Aug.,	1845
234.	W. W. Duncan,	Cleish,	Peebles,	1836	" 9th July,	1864
235.	Thomas Doig, M.A.,	Torryburn,		1819	" 26th Sept.,	1866
236.	And. Sutherland, M.A.,	Dunfermline,	Gibraltar,	1839	" 18th Oct.,	1867
237.	James Thornton,	Milnathort,	Orwell,	1816	" 3rd Sept.,	1874
238.	William Gilston,	Carnock,		1827	" 29th July,	1881
239.	Charles Marshall,	Dunfermline,		1841	" 16th June,	1882

35. Presbytery of Kinross.

240.	Hugh Laird, D.D.,	Portmoak,		1801	Died 28th May,	1849

36. Presbytery of Kirkcaldy.

30.	Alex. O. Laird,	Abbotshall,	Dundee,	1833		
31.	John Isdale,	Inverteil,	Glasgow,	1843		
241.	John Thomson,	Dysart,		1820	Died 24th March,	1848
242.	Jas. Sievewright, D.D.,	Markinch,		1815	" 29th Nov.,	1852
243.	John Alexander, D.D.,	Kirkcaldy,		1836	" 21st May,	1863
244.	Charles Watson, D.D.,	Burntisland,	retired,	1820	" 11th Aug.,	1866
245.	Charles Jamieson,	Pathhead,		1840	" 1st Feb.,	1870
246.	Robert M'Indoe,	Kirkcaldy,	Galston,	1831	" 10th March,	1877
247.	David Couper, D.D.,	Burntisland,		1834	" 20th March,	1882

	Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.		
	37. Presbytery of Cupar.					
32.	J. W. Taylor, D.D.,	Flisk,		1839		
248.	Andrew Melville,	Logie,		1803	Died 30th June,	1848
249.	John Duncan,	Ceres,	St. Boswells,	1836	" 4th May,	1867
250.	Angus M'Gillivray,	Dairsie,		1828	" 8th Dec.,	1873
251.	John Macfarlane, D.D.,	Collessie,	Dalkeith,	1823	" 2nd June,	1875
252.	James Brodie, M.A.,	Monimail,		1829	" 3rd Feb.,	1878
253.	Adam Cairns, D.D.,	Cupar,	Melbourne,	1828	" 30th Jan.,	1881
254.	John Murray,	Dunbog,	Abdie,	1837	" 29th April,	1882
255.	George Smeaton, D.D.,	Falkland,	Professor,	1839	" 14th April,	1889
	38. Presbytery of St. Andrews.					
33.	W. Ferrie, M.A.,	Easter Ans'ter,	Brunswick,	1839		
256.	Charles Nairn,	Forgan,	Dundee,	1836	Died 17th March,	1873
257.	R. Lundin Brown,	Largo,		1821	" 9th April,	1877
258.	Ralph Robb,	Strathkinnes,	Halifax,	1827	" ——	
259.	Wm. Nicolson, D.D.,	Ferry-port-on-Craig,	Hobart Tn.,	1828	" 2nd Jan.,	1890

IX. SYNOD OF ANGUS AND MEARNS.

	39. Presbytery of Meigle.					
34.	R. Macdonald, D.D.,	Blairgowrie,	Leith,	1837		
260.	David White,	Airlie,		1833	Died 29th Dec.,	1873
	40. Presbytery of Forfar.					
35.	Donald Fergusson,	Dunnichen,	Leven,	1837		
261.	Daniel Cormick,	Kirriemuir,		1839	Died 24th May,	1848
262.	William Clugston, M.A.,	Forfar,		1817	" 3rd March,	1857
	41. Presbytery of Dundee.					
36.	John Baxter, D.D.,	Hilltown,	Blairgowrie,	1838		
37.	Alex. M'Pherson,	Dudhope,	Meigle,	1841		
263.	David Davidson,	Broughty-Ferry,		1827	Died 25th Aug.,	1843
264.	Robert Aitken,	Willison Church,		1811	" 1st July,	1845
265.	William Stewart,	Lochee,		1832	" 13th Oct.,	1852
266.	Charles Macalister,	Dundee,		1819	" 11th Feb.,	1854
267.	Robert S. Walker,	Longforgan,		1807	" 11th May,	1854
268.	William Reid,	Chapelshade,	Collessie,	1830	" 22nd Dec.,	1854
269.	James Miller,	Monikie,		1803	" 25th May,	1860
270.	David B. Mellis,	Tealing,		1830	" 26th May,	1861

	Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.		
271.	Patrick L. Miller,	Wallacetown,	Newcastle,	1840	Died 16th April,	1866
272.	George Lewis,	Dundee,	Ormiston,	1837	" 27th Jan.,	1879
273.	John Roxburgh, D.D.,	Dundee,	Glasgow,	1834	" 2nd Nov.,	1880
274.	Samuel Miller, D.D.,	Monifieth,	Glasgow,	1836	" 5th July,	1881
275.	James Ewing,	Dundee,		1837	" 12th Feb.,	1886

42. Presbytery of Brechin.

38.	William Nixon, D.D.,	Montrose,		1832		
39.	James M'Cosh, LL.D.,	Brechin,	Princet'n Un.,	1835		
276.	And. Fergusson, M.A.,	Maryton,		1795	Died 24th Oct.,	1843
277.	James Brewster, D.D.,	Craig,		1804	" 5th Feb.,	1849
278.	Mungo J. Parker,	Brechin,		1837	" 1st April,	1867
279.	Robert Inglis,	Edzell,		1837	" 19th Jan.,	1876
280.	A. L. R. Foote, D.D.,	Brechin,		1835	" 6th Sept.,	1878

43. Presbytery of Arbroath.

40.	John Laird, D.D.,	Inverkeillor,	Cupar,	1835		
41.	John Montgomery, M.A.,	Arbroath,	Innerleithen,	1839		
281.	John Kirk,	Arbirlot,		1824	Died 4th March,	1858
282.	Thomas Wilson,	Friockheim,		1837	" 30th March,	1872
283.	James Lumsden, D.D.,	Barry,	Principal,	1836	" 7th Oct.,	1875
284.	Alexander Leslie,	Ladyloan,	Aberdeen,	1842	" 11th May,	1878
285.	William Wilson, D.D.,	Carmylie,	Dundee,	1837	" 14th Jan.,	1888
286.	Thomas Dymock, M.A.,	Carnoustie,	Perth,	1837	" 4th Feb.,	1888
287.	David Crichton, LL.D.,	Inverbrothock,		1838	" 4th Feb.,	1888

44. Presbytery of Fordoun.

42.	Thomas Brown, D.D.,	Kinneff,	Edinburgh,	1837		
288.	James Glen, M.A.,	Benholme,		1826	Died 11th Dec.,	1866
289.	Alexander Keith, D.D.,	St. Cyrus,		1816	" 15th Feb.,	1880
290.	Alex. Keith, jun., M.A.,	St. Cyrus,		1840	" 29th April,	1880

X. SYNOD OF ABERDEEN.

45. Presbytery of Aberdeen.

43.	Alex. Spence, D.D.,	St. Clement's		1837		
291.	Robert Thomson,	Peterculter,		1840	Died 30th Jan.,	1845
292.	Gavin Parker,	Bon-Accord,		1823	" 5th June,	1845
293.	James Stewart,	South Church,		1838	" 5th June,	1846
294.	James Foote, D.D.,	East Church,		1809	" 25th June,	1856
295.	George Moir, M.A.,	New Machar,		1840	" 17th June,	1857
296.	John Fleming, D.D.,	Professor,	Edinburgh,	...	" 18th Nov.,	1857

	Name.	*Place.*	*Removed to*	*Date of Ordination.*		
297.	Hugh Mackenzie,	Gaelic Church,		1822	Died 31st Jan.,	1859
298.	Robert Forbes, M.A.,	Woodside,		1836	" 21st Oct.,	1859
299.	John Murray, D.D.,	North Church,		1816	" 1st March,	1861
300.	James Bryce, D.D.,	Gilcomston,		1824	" 23rd March,	1861
301.	A. Black, D.D.,	Professor,	Edinburgh,	1816	" — Feb.,	1864
302.	David Simpson,	Trinity,		1823	" 28th July,	1864
303.	William Primrose,	Melville Church,		1806	" 30th May,	1866
304.	A. D. Davidson, D.D.,	West Church,		1832	" 27th April,	1872
305.	Robert J. Brown, D.D.,	Professor,		1821	" 7th Dec.,	1872
306.	Aberer.L.Gordon,M.A.,	Greyfriars,		1826	" 17th March,	1873
307.	William Mitchell,	Holborn,		1838	" 15th May,	1880
308.	John Stephen, M.A.,	John Knox's,		1838	" 17th June,	1881
309.	J. Longmuir, LL.D.,	Mariners',		1840	" 7th May,	1883
310.	John Allan,	Aberdeen,	retired,	1832	" 21st May,	1885

46. Presbytery of Kincardine-o'-Neil.

44.	David S. Fergusson,	Strachan,		1836		
311.	James M'Gown,	Bankhead,	Airdrie,	1832	Died 2nd June,	1864
312.	W. Anderson, LL.D.,	Banchory-Ternan,		1830	" 7th Dec.,	1870
313.	Donald Campbell,	Cluny,	Ballater,	1841	" 22nd Sept.,	1878
314.	Donald Stewart,	Glengairn,		1833	" 24th July,	1879
315.	Farquhar Macrae,	Braemar,	Knockbain,	1833	" 19th Dec.,	1882

47. Presbytery of Alford.—*None.*

48. Presbytery of Garioch.

316.	Henry Simson,	Chapel-Garioch,		1817	Died 30th Jan.,	1850
317.	Robert Simpson, D.D.,	Kintore,		1833	" 29th June,	1870
318.	David Simson,	Oyne,		1839	" 8th March,	1871
319.	George Garioch, M.A.,	Old Meldrum,		1817	" 12th May,	1872

49. Presbytery of Ellon.

320.	Alexander Philip, M.A.,	Cruden,	Portobello,	1836	Died 1st March,	1861

50. Presbytery of Deer.

45.	James Yuill,	Peterhead,		1835		
321.	J. Anderson, D.D.,	St. Fergus,	Morpeth,	1822	Died 17th May,	1882

51. Presbytery of Turriff.

46.	Wm. G. Blaikie, D.D.,	Drumblade,	Professor,	1842		
322.	Gilbert Brown,	New Byth,		1816	Died 3rd Aug.,	1852
323.	Joseph Thorburn,	Forglen,	Inverness,	1829	" 15th May,	1854
324.	Hugh Gordon,	Monquhitter,		1829	" — June,	1866
325.	John Manson, M.A.,	Fyvie,		1829	" 20th Nov.,	1872

	Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.		
			52. Presbytery of Fordyce.			
47.	David Brown, D.D.,	Ord,	Principal,	1836		
326.	George Innes,	Cullen,	Canonbie,	1843	Died 24th Nov.,	1847
327.	George Innes, M.A.,	Deskford,		1808	" 1st Oct.,	1851
328.	Francis W. Grant, M.A.,	Banff,		1816	" 12th April,	1858
329.	Alexander Reid, M.A.,	Portsoy,		1829	" 7th April,	1863
330.	Robert Shanks, M.A.,	Buckie,		1837	" 17th April,	1884
331.	Alex. Anderson, M.A.,	Boyndie,	Gymnasium, Old Aberdn.,	1830	" 25th Oct.,	1884
			XI. SYNOD OF MORAY.			
			53. Presbytery of Strathbogie.			
48.	W. R. Moncur,	Botriphnie,	Liff,	1843		
332.	John Robertson,	Gartly,		1819	Died 3rd June,	1850
333.	David Henry,	Marnoch,		1834	" 7th Oct.,	1870
334.	William Sinclair,	Huntly,	Kirkwall,	1843	" 20th March,	1874
335.	Thomas Wright,	Rhynie,	Swinton,	1842	" 3rd Dec.,	1882
336.	Thomas Bain,	Mortlach,	Coupar-Angus,	1842	" 8th March,	1884
337.	David Dewar,	Bellie,		1837	" 5th May,	1885
338.	W. Taylor,	Glass,	Wick, retired,	1843	" 12th March,	1886
339.	W. Moffat,	Cairnie,		1843	" 15th Sept.,	1886
			54. Presbytery of Abernethy.			
340.	George Shepherd,	Kingussie,		1818	Died 20th July,	1853
341.	Alexander Tulloch,	Kirkmichael,		1820	" 5th Dec.,	1855
			55. Presbytery of Aberlour.			
342.	Alexander M'Watt,	Rothes,		1839	Died 27th Nov.,	1880
			56. Presbytery of Elgin.			
343.	Robert Dunbar, M.A.,	Pluscarden,		1840	Died 17th Feb.,	1859
344.	Alexander Gentle,	Alves,		1828	" 25th March,	1869
345.	Alexander Topp, D.D.,	Elgin,	Toronto,	1838	" 6th Oct.,	1879
346.	David Waters,	Burghead,		1826	" 31st March,	1887
			57. Presbytery of Forres.			
347.	Wm. Robertson, M.A.,	Kinloss,		1813	Died 13th Nov.,	1860
348.	George Mackay, D.D.,	Rafford,		1816	" 19th Jan.,	1863
349.	Duncan Grant, M.A.,	Forres,		1814	" 17th March,	1866
350.	Mark Aitken,	Dyke,		1816	" 20th June,	1869

	Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.		
			58. Presbytery of Inverness.			
351.	John Grant,	Petty,	Roseneath,	1834	Died 2nd Sept.,	1855
352.	Archibald Cook,	Inverness,	Daviot,	1823	" 6th May,	1865
353.	David Sutherland,	Inverness,		1839	" 18th Oct.,	1875
354.	Alexander Fraser,	Kirkhill,		1828	" 21st June,	1883
355.	T. M'Lauchlan, LL.D.,	Moy,	Edinburgh,	1838	" 21st March,	1886
			59. Presbytery of Nairn.			
356.	John Matheson,	Ardersier,		1839	Died 12th Nov.,	1848
357.	William Barclay, M.A.,	Auldearn,		1814	" 4th June,	1857
358.	Simon F. M'Lauchlan,	Cawdor,		1833	" 8th May,	1881

XII. SYNOD OF ROSS.

			60. Presbytery of Chanonry.			
359.	Alexander Stewart,	Cromarty,		1824	Died 5th Nov.,	1847
360.	Donald Sage, M.A.,	Kirkmichael,		1816	" 31st March,	1869
361.	Donald Kennedy,	Killearnan,		1838	" 23rd May,	1871
362.	John M'Rae,	Knockbain,	Carloway,	1833	" 9th Oct.,	1876
363.	Simon Fraser,	Fortrose,		1835	" 6th Sept.,	1887
			61. Presbytery of Dingwall.			
364.	J. Macdonald, D.D.,	Urquhart,		1806	Died 16th April,	1849
365.	John Noble, M.A.,	Fodderty,		1833	" 16th April,	1849
366.	John Mackenzie,	Carnoch,		1829	" 6th Nov.,	1864
367.	Alexander Flyter,	Alness,		1811	" 3rd Jan.,	1866
368.	Alexander Anderson,	Keanloch-Luichart,		1842	" 1st Dec.,	1866
369.	George M'Leod,	Maryborough,	Lochbroom,	1841	" 2nd May,	1871
370.	Patrick Tulloch,	Strathglass,	Inveravon,	1842	" 22nd July,	1871
371.	Duncan Campbell,	Kiltearn,		1834	" 21st Oct.,	1873
372.	James M'Donald,	Urray,		1830	" 14th Feb.,	1882
			62. Presbytery of Tain.			
49.	Hugh M'Leod, D.D.,	Logie-Easter,	Cape Breton,	1833		
50.	Gustavus Aird, D.D.,	Croich,	Criech,	1841		
373.	John Macalister,	Nigg,		1824	Died 17th Dec.,	1844
374.	Donald Gordon, M.A.,	Edderton,		1822	" 30th Aug.,	1847
375.	Hector Allan, M.A.,	Kincardine,		1818	" 9th Dec.,	1853
376.	David Carment, M.A.,	Rosskeen,		1810	" 26th May,	1856
377.	C. R. Matheson, M.A.,	Kilmuir-Easter,		1812	" 14th May,	1866
378.	Chs. C. Mackintosh, D.D.,	Tain,	Dunoon,	1828	" 24th Nov.,	1868
379.	David Campbell,	Tarbat,	Lawers,	1832	" 25th Jan.,	1877

Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.	

XIII. SYNOD OF SUTHERLAND AND CAITHNESS.

63. Presbytery of Dornoch.

51.	George R. Kennedy,	Dornoch,		1837		
380.	Duncan Macgillivray,	Lairg,		1801	Died 11th Feb.,	1849
381.	Angus Kennedy,	Dornoch,		1802	" 22nd June,	1855
382.	J. D. Kennedy,	Rosehall,		1835	" 20th March,	1873
383.	Charles Gordon,	Assynt,		1825	" 25th Sept.,	1873
384.	Peter Davidson,	Stoer,	Kilbride,	1830	" 15th April,	1875
385.	George Mackay, D.D.,	Clyne,	Inverness,	1828	" 27th June,	1886

64. Presbytery of Tongue.

386.	Hugh Mackenzie,	Tongue,		1796	Died 30th June,	1845
387.	William Mackenzie,	Tongue,		1843	" 25th July,	1845
388.	Robert R. Mackay,	Halkirk,	Bruan,	1838	" 22nd Nov.,	1866
389.	David Mackenzie,	Farr,		1813	" 24th Feb.,	1868
390.	William Findlater,	Durness,		1808	" 29th June,	1869
391.	George Tulloch,	Edrachillis,		1829	" 27th Jan.,	1880

65. Presbytery of Caithness.

52.	W. R. Taylor, D.D.,	Thurso,		1829		
53.	Alexander Gunn,	Watten,		1837		
392.	John Munro,	Halkirk,		1806	Died 1st April,	1847
393.	W. Mackenzie,	Olrig,		1819	" 20th June,	1857
394.	Finlay Cook,	Reay,		1817	" 12th June,	1858
395.	Samuel Campbell,	Berriedale,		1837	" 15th Dec.,	1868
396.	Charles Thomson,	Wick,		1823	" 26th April,	1871
397.	George Davidson,	Latheron,		1819	" 14th Aug.,	1873
398.	Thomas Gunn,	Keiss,	Madderty,	1829	" 8th March,	1886

XIV. SYNOD OF GLENELG.

66. Presbytery of Lochcarron.

399.	Thomas Ross, LL.D.,	Lochbroom,		1798	Died — October,	1843
400.	Alexander Macdonald,	Plockton,		1826	" 15th Aug.,	1864
401.	Donald Macrae,	Poolewe,	Kilmorie,	1830	" 6th Aug.,	1868
402.	George Corbett,	Knoydart,	Arnisdale, Mis. Glenelg,	1836	" 19th Sept.,	1863
403.	Colin Mackenzie, M.A.,	Sheildaig,	retired,	1827	" 8th Dec.,	1882

	Name.	Place.	Removed to	Date of Ordination.		
	67. Presbytery of Abertarff.					
404.	Thom. Davidson, M.A.,	Kilmallie, . .		1829	Died 13th Dec.,	1871
405.	John Macmillan, .	Ballachulish, .	Cardross,	1828	" ——	
406.	W. Lauder, . .	Glengarry, .	Strachur,	1840	" 14th Oct.,	1885
407.	Charles Stewart, .	Fort-William, .		1840	" 17th Sept.,	1886
	68. Presbytery of Skye and Uist.					
408.	John R. Glass, .	Bracadale, .	Musselburgh,	1826	Died 29th Dec.,	1855
409.	Roderick M'Leod,	Snizort, . .		1823	" 20th March,	1868
410.	John Swanson, .	Small Isles, .	Nigg,	1839	" 14th Jan.,	1874
411.	Norman Macleod,	Trumisgarry, .		1835	" 5th March,	1881
	69. Presbytery of Lewis.					
412.	John Finlay, .	Cross, . .		1840	Died 17th Sept.,	1844
413.	Robert Finlayson,	Lochs, . .		1829	" 23rd July,	1861
414.	Alexander M'Leod,	Uig, . .	Rogart,	1819	" 13th Nov.,	1869
415.	Duncan Mathison,	Knock, . .	Gairloch, Glenelg,	1831	" 12th Dec.,	1873
	70. Presbytery of Orkney.					
416.	Peter Petrie, M.A.,	Kirkwall, . .	Govan,	1831	Died 28th Jan.,	1850
417.	James Smellie, .	St. Andrews, .		1805	" 22nd Dec.,	1852
418.	W. Malcolm, M.A.,	Firth and Stennis,		1807	" 1st Dec.,	1857
419.	Peter Learmonth,	Stromness, .		1833	" 21st Oct.,	1858
420.	George Ritchie, M.A.,	Rousay, . .		1834	" 23rd Oct.,	1858
421.	Adam White, M.A.,	N. Ronaldshay, .	Harray,	1837	" 16th Aug.,	1873
422.	Adam Rettie, .	Evie, . . .		1841	" 12th April,	1875
	71. Presbytery of Shetland.					
54.	John Ingram, . .	Unst, . .		1838		
423.	John Elder, . .	Walls, . .		1840	Died 4th Feb.,	1860
424.	Archibald Sinclair,	Walls, . .	Edinburgh,	—	" 20th Jan.,	1867
425.	James Gardner, .	Quarff, . .		1830	" 23rd Jan.,	1867
426.	James Ingram, D.D.,	Unst, . .		1803	" 3rd March,	1879
427.	Alexander Stark, M.A.,	Sandwick, . .	Closeburn,	1830	" 12th Aug.,	1881

LIST OF SCOTTISH MISSIONARIES WHO LEFT THE ESTABLISHMENT IN 1843, SHOWING THE NAMES OF THOSE WHO SURVIVE IN MARCH, 1890, AND OF THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN REMOVED BY DEATH.

INDIA.

	Name.	*Station.*	*Ordained.*	
1.	J. Murray Mitchell, LL.D.,	Bombay,	July, 1838	
2.	Thomas Smith, D.D.,	Calcutta,	7th March, 1839	
1.	John Macdonald,	Calcutta,	17th March, 1831	Died in India, 1st Sept., 1847
2.	Robert Johnston,	Madras,	5th Sept., 1838	" at Edin., 22nd March, 1853
3.	John Anderson,	Madras,	13th July, 1836	" in India, 25th March, 1855
4.	Robert Nesbit,	Bombay,	15th Dec., 1826	" in India, 27th July, 1855
5.	David Ewart, D.D.,	Calcutta,	July, 1834	" in India, 9th Sept., 1860
6.	Wm. Sinclair Mackay, D.D.,	Calcutta,	May, 1831	" at Edin., Sept., 1865
7.	James Mitchell,	Poona,	Aug., 1822	" in India, 28th March, 1866
8.	John Braidwood, M.A.,	Madras,	6th Aug., 1840	" at Edin., 30th April, 1875
9.	John Wilson, D.D., F.R.S.,	Bombay,	24th June, 1828	" in India, 1st Dec., 1875
10.	Alex. Duff, D.D., LL.D.,	Calcutta,	12th Aug., 1829	" in England, 12th Feb., 1878

TO THE JEWS.

	Name.	*Station.*	*Removed to*	*Ordained.*	
3.	Daniel Edward,	Jassy,	Breslau,	11th Mar., 1841	
4.	Robert Smith, D.D.,	Pesth,	Corsock,	April, 1842	
11.	C. Schwartz, D.D.,	Constantinople,	Amsterdam,	1843	Died 24th Aug., 1870
12.	John Duncan, D.D.,	Pesth,	Professor,	1836	" 26th Feb., 1870
13.	W. O. Allan, K.D.,	Syria,	retired,	1842	" 8th Jan., 1885

At the Disruption, the Glasgow Missionary Society had a staff of Missionaries engaged in South Africa in connection with the Church of Scotland. In 1844 the Society, with the whole of their Missionaries, joined the Free Church—the property being at the same time handed over. The list was as follows :—

	Name.	*Station.*	*Ordained.*	
14.	Rev. John Bennie,		29th May, 1821	Died in South Africa, 9th Feb., 1869
15.	James Laing,	Burnshill,	3rd Aug., 1830	" at Burnshill, 28th Jan., 1872
16.	Wm. Govan,	Lovedale,	21st July, 1840	" in Scotland, 30th April, 1875
17.	John Ross, M.A.,	Pirie,	5th March, 1823	" at Pirie, 7th June, 1878

APPENDIX II.

LIST OF DISRUPTION MANUSCRIPTS.

I. St. David's, Glasgow. Rev. J. G. Lorimer, D.D.
II. See under XXXV.
III. Muirkirk. Rev. S. W. Reid.
IV. St. Leonard's, Perth. Kirk-Session.
V. Stanley. Rev. W. Mather.
VI. Gordon. Rev. J. Fraser.
VII. Nenthorn. Rev. R. Lang.
VIII. Muthil. Rev. W. Douglas.
IX. Torosay, Mull. J. Middleton, Esq., Elder.
X. Huntly and Kirkwall. Rev. W. Sinclair.
XI. Errol. Rev. J. Grierson, D.D.
XII. Cleish. Rev. W. W. Duncan.
XIII. Braco, &c. Rev. S. Grant.
XIV. Roslin. Rev. D. Brown.
XV. Deskford. Rev. G. Innes.
XVI. Ruthwell. Rev. H. Duncan, D.D., and Mrs. Duncan.
XVII. Gartly. Rev. J. Robertson.
XVIII. Walls. Rev. J. Elder.
XIX. Wanlockhead. Rev. J. Hastings.
XX. Farr. Rev. D. Mackenzie.
XXI. Collace. Rev. Andrew A. Bonar, D.D.
XXII. Innerleithen. Rev. J. Montgomery.
XXIII. Kirkbean. Rev. R. Gibson.
XXIV. East Church, Aberdeen. Rev. J. Foote, D.D.
XXV. Madderty and Keiss. Rev. Thomas Gun.
XXVI. Leslie and Premnay. Rev. R. M'Combie.
XXVII. Woodside, Aberdeen. Rev. R. Forbes.
XXVIII. Muckhart. Rev. J. Thomson.
XXIX. Kilsyth. Rev. W. Burns, D.D.
XXX. Luss. Rev. Neil Stewart.
XXXI. Lesmahagow. Rev. A. B. Parker, D.D.
XXXII. Forgan.
XXXIII. Humbie, &c. Rev. J. Dodds.
XXXIV. Monkton. Rev. J. M'Farlan.
XXXV. Kirkcaldy and Galston. Rev. R. Macindoe.
XXXVI. Ochiltree. Rev. J. Patrick.
XXXVII. Grangemouth and Flisk. Rev. J. W. Taylor.
XXXVIII. Methlick. Rev. J. Mennie, A.M.
XXXIX. Stevenston. Rev. Dr. Landsborough.
XL. Aberdalgie and Dunning. Rev. C. Stewart.
XLI. Ayr. Rev. W. Grant.
XLII. Catrine and Johnstone. Rev. W. Hutchison.

XLIII. Denholm. Rev. J. M'Clymont.
XLIV. Fochabers. Rev. D. Dewar.
XLV. Largo. Rev. R. Lundin Brown.
XLVI. Sheildaig. Rev. C. Mackenzie.
XLVII. Strathfillan. Rev. A. Mackinnon.
XLVIII. Symington. Rev. G. Orr.
XLIX. Moy. Rev. Th. M'Lauchlan, LL.D.
L. Westruther and Elie. Rev. W. Wood, A.M.
LI. Auldearn.
LII. Statement by A. Kerr, Esq.
LIII. Forgandenny. Rev. James Drummond.
LIV. St. Andrews. Rev. J. Thomson, Leith.
LV. Blairgowrie, &c. Rev. Dr. M'Donald, and Friends.
LVI. Duirness. Rev. Eric Findlater.
LVII. Yester. Rev. Dr. Thomson, Paisley.
LVIII. Drumblade. Rev. G. Ramsay Davidson, D.D.
LIX. Houndwood, &c. Rev. A. Spence.
LX. Aberfeldy. Rev. D. R. Clark.
LXI. Monzie. Rev. J. R. Omond.
LXII. Kilmodan. Rev. Duncan M'Lean.
LXIII. Kenmore. Rev. A. Sinclair.
LXIV. Larbert. Rev. B. F. Greig, of Kinfauns.
LXV. Prestonkirk. Rev. J. Thomson.
LXVI. Aberdeen. Notes by Francis Edmond, Esq., Advocate.
LXVII. Fearn (Tain). Rev. J. M'Donald.
LXVIII. Wanlockhead, &c. Rev. D. Landsborough.
LXIX. Tain. Rev. J. Grant.
LXX. Braemar. Rev. F. M'Rae.
LXXI. Rothesay, &c. Rev. Dr. Elder.
LXXII. Comrie. S. Carment, Esq.
LXXIII. Erskine. The Rev. Dr. Stewart, Leghorn.
LXXIV. Personal Reminiscences. Rev. Dr. Cairns, Melbourne.
LXXV. Personal Reminiscences. Rev. Dr. Nicolson, Hobart Town.
LXXVI. Dunedin. Rev. Mr. Bannerman.
LXXVII. Burntisland. Rev. Dr. Couper.
LXXVIII. Presbytery of Forfar. Rev. D. Fergusson.
LXXIX. Skye, Notes on. Rev. A. Fraser, Kirkhill.
LXXX. Resolis. Mr. G. Macculloch.
LXXXI. Ballantrae. Rev. D. Landsborough.
LXXXII. Torosay. Rev. J. A. Fletcher, Hamilton.
LXXXIII. Kilcalmonell. Mr. Walker, Canada.
LXXXIV. Strathbogie. Rev. Thomas Bain, Coupar-Angus.
LXXXV. Glenisla. Rev. Thomas Bain, Coupar-Angus.
LXXXVI. Glenisla. J. Mackenzie, Esq., Alrick.
LXXXVII. Laggan. Rev. D. Shaw.
LXXXVIII. Portpatrick. Rev. A. Urquhart.

APPENDIX III.—Showing the Aggregate Amount of Funds raised by the Free Church during Thirty-one Years, from the Disruption to 1873-74 inclusive.

	Building Fund.		Sustentation, Supplementary, Aged and Infirm Ministers.	Congregational.	Education.	Colleges.	Missions.	General Trustees and Miscellaneous.	Total.
	General.	Local							
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
1843-44,	£85,238 9 1	£142,598 10 9½	£61,513 6 10½	£41,540 11 10¾	£3,722 2 9	£1,220 16 5	£26,847 14 0	£1,190 5 7	£363,871 17 4½
1844-45,	34,205 19 7	97,531 14 10½	76,180 6 7½	69,985 15 3½	4,003 12 4	9,220 15 3	40,302 14 10	2,173 4 4½	333,604 3 1¾
1845-46,	23,773 15 8	66,065 19 0½	80,290 8 10½	70,675 0 2¾	9,654 16 0½	7,201 1 11	37,507 11 4½	1,090 8 7	296,259 1 8½
1846-47,	38,920 9 5	46,446 10 8¾	82,166 8 8	78,226 18 7	10,141 16 9	8,472 1 3	53,192 3 3	26 15 4	317,593 3 11½
1847-48,	23,269 2 6	34,566 3 0¾	89,051 8 11	71,850 6 7	10,317 11 3	6,154 4 9	40,103 8 1½	35 6 5	275,347 11 7¼
1848-49,	22,010 15 10	43,981 6 0½	88,328 5 0	71,379 6 9½	11,019 18 7	8,950 2 10	26,789 11 5	1 7 8	272,460 14 1¾
1849-50,	24,708 4 3	52,608 11 11½	90,972 13 8	77,589 12 9½	11,196 15 5	5,608 6 1	28,293 7 11¾	15,361 17 6	306,339 9 7¾
1850-51,	18,002 19 5	51,947 12 2½	96,846 9 5	74,472 6 11½	13,006 13 10	15,000 1 6	34,249 18 3	55 5 0	303,581 6 6½
1851-52,	5,000 3 1	37,510 4 1½	93,426 8 2	80,334 2 3¾	15,015 17 2	6,077 13 4	31,105 4 9	712 7 3	269 182 0 2¼
1852-53,	5,215 8 1	37,100 2 8¼	93,065 11 11	79,715 13 8½	13,135 18 8	10,389 1 11	38,596 5 3	318 5 0	277 5 7 2¾
1853-54,	3,401 16 11	37,375 3 3½	109,253 2 0	83,504 14 1	12,672 2 3	6,822 13 11	35,218 14 3	1,421 16 8	289,0.0 3 4½
1854-55,	2,985 18 8	33,688 14 10½	107,347 4 11	85,870 19 10½	13,887 19 6	9,607 1 6	43,327 1 4	9,761 5 4	306,476 6 0
1855-56,	5,390 15 6	30,200 5 6¾	111,318 17 9	86,749 12 3½	13,110 14 3	5,670 10 11	36,018 1 3	109 13 3	288,568 10 9
1856-57,	6,785 10 11	43,433 2 9	115,708 2 4	87,870 19 2½	14,133 3 7	7,084 0 4	32,944 15 4	264 17 7	308,224 12 0½
1857-58,	15,960 15 7	46,896 18 8½	114,412 8 0	92,556 12 2½	16,673 17 4	5,851 15 10	39,336 9 0	104 15 10	331,793 12 5¾
1858-59,	9,340 14 0	41,179 2 0½	126,282 14 6	94,481 19 6	17,764 15 3	9,000 8 5	37,682 5 5	6,991 13 3	342,723 12 4½
1859-60,	6,716 4 1	35,855 9 0	111,682 5 9	97,363 2 11	16,556 12 4	6,302 17 3	37,631 17 6	7,709 7 10	319,817 16 8
1860-61,	6,011 6 11	36,539 8 11	118,692 0 3	100,134 6 1	16,723 11 4	7,232 7 2	39,384 13 6	6,274 6 11	330,992 1 1
1861-62,	3,829 3 11	38,518 4 1	115,815 17 2	105,341 18 10	15,430 18 1	13,685 8 7	40,667 5 11	4,148 12 0	337,437 8 9
1862-63,	4,097 16 5	48,892 15 8½	118,206 11 7	111,764 2 10½	16,275 6 6	7,209 1 1	30,481 19 6	6,153 3 8	343,080 17 4
1863-64,	981 16 1	49,314 7 4	121,760 2 1	107,396 18 0¾	15,800 19 2	6,932 14 9	37,768 11 8	3,670 16 10	343,626 5 9¾
1864-65,	2,247 0 9	41,821 13 6¾	123,052 4 1	113,364 5 0½	19,308 12 10	6,094 8 4	47,619 11 5	5,502 3 6	359,009 19 6
1865-66,	149 17 5	55,033 8 7¾	135,426 12 8	118,792 11 5¾	19,664 14 0	10,661 7 5	40,482 9 6	3,674 5 9	383,890 6 10½
1866-67,	1,771 6 4	46,963 15 1	129,468 3 5	122,259 18 8½	20,358 18 2	7,672 7 11	36,816 1 5	3,803 13 6	369,114 4 6½
1867-68,	3,037 3 6	56,279 3 5¾	139,236 12 7	126,427 19 6	19,123 9 5	6,498 10 5	41,426 7 5	3,746 9 10	395,775 16 1¾
1868-69,	2,399 13 6	59,919 3 1	143,082 16 2	126,445 13 10¾	19,245 5 8	17,268 18 3	49,141 2 3	4,293 12 0	421,796 4 9½
1869-70,	348 4 6	53,336 6 6	140,962 0 9	132,329 8 6	19,098 4 0	7,479 19 10	56,598 18 4	17,468 15 7	427,621 18 0
1870-71,	2,851 5 7	40,565 0 8	143,774 8 8	135,864 4 6	22,893 16 4	9,073 17 1	54,836 14 5	3,334 5 2	413,193 12 5
1871-72,	175 7 11	56,507 9 1	145,714 3 11	140,941 3 4	21,795 0 7	10,963 19 7	52,585 13 2	3,840 2 2	432,522 19 9
1872-73,	2,679 17 8	73,250 19 3	143,160 15 2	147,715 6 1	21,021 15 6	6,969 19 5	52,808 15 7	5,091 18 7	452,699 7 3
1873-74,	193 8 11	52,469 1 7	181,911 17 3	153,691 15 7	19,928 14 2	14,977 1 0	56,004 18 1	31,014 7 11	510,191 4 6
	361,700 12 0	1,588,401 8 7	3,548,110 14 1	3,086,637 7 6	472,683 13 0	261,353 14 3	1,255,770 5 7	149,345 5 11	10,723,102 15 11

APPENDIX IV.

SINCE THE PRECEDING LIST WAS DRAWN UP AS AT 1ST MARCH, 1890, THE FOLLOWING MINISTERS HAVE DIED.

Name.	*Place.*	*Removed to.*	*Ordained.*	*Died.*
1. Andrew Urquhart,	Portpatrick,		1832	10th March, 1890
2. George Ramsay Davidson, D.D.,	Lady Glenorchy's,		1828	17th May, 1890
3. William Alexander,	Duntocher,		1838	2nd June, 1890
4. John Baillie,	Fogo,	England,		June, 1890
5. Alexander Spence, D.D.,	Aberdeen,		1837	30th August, 1890
6. George Fulton Knight, M.A.,	Wemyss,		1832	12th February, 1891
7. Alexander Wilson,	Bridgeton,		1841	23rd February, 1891
8. John Isdale,	Glasgow,		1843	29th March, 1891
9. Alexander Beith, D.D.,	Stirling,		1822	11th May, 1891
10. Alexander O. Laird,	Dundee,		1833	20th May, 1891
11. John J. Bonar, D.D.,	Greenock,		1835	7th July, 1891
12. Neil Brodie,	Pollokshaws,		1842	10th March, 1892
13. Robert Elder, D.D.,	Rothesay,		1831	30th March, 1892
14. Alexander M'Pherson,	Meigle,		1841	17th June, 1892
15. John Reid Omond, D.D.,	Monzie,		1836	4th July, 1892
16. John Ingram, M.A.,	Unst,		1837	15th November, 1892

THE FOLLOWING PRE-DISRUPTION MINISTERS STILL SURVIVE. THE NAMES ARE GIVEN IN THE ORDER OF THEIR ORDINATION.

Name.	*Place.*	*Removed to.*	*Ordained.*
1. John Thomson,	Shettleston,	Aberdeen,	25th September, 1829
2. W. Ross Taylor, D.D.,	Thurso,		28th November, 1829
3. John Wright,	Alloa,		24th August, 1830
4. William Nixon, D.D.,	Montrose,		14th June, 1831
5. David Thorburn, D.D.,	South Leith,		14th March, 1833
6. John Fairbairn,	Greenlaw,		30th October, 1833

Name.	*Place.*	*Removed to.*	*Ordained.*
7. Hugh M'Leod, D.D.,	Logie-Easter,	Cape Breton,	28th November, 1833
8. John Laird, D.D.,	Inverkeillor,	Cupar,	19th March, 1835
9. John Ainslie, D.D.,	Dirleton,	St. Andrews,	June, 1835
10. James Yuill,	Peterhead,		3rd December, 1835
11. James M'Cosh, D.D.,	Brechin,	Princeton,	17th December, 1835
12. David S. Ferguson,	Strachan,		10th June, 1836
13. W. Chalmers, D.D.,	Dailly,	London,	5th August, 1836
14. W. Grant, D.D.,	Tenandry,	Australia,	15th September, 1836
15. David Brown, D.D.,	Principal,		17th November, 1836
16. Alexander Gunn,	Watten,		26th April, 1837
17. Alexander Moody Stuart, D.D.,	St. Luke's, Edin.,		June, 1837
18. R. Macdonald, D.D.,	Blairgowrie,	Leith,	15th June, 1837
19. P. Borrowman,	Glencairn,		25th August, 1837
20. Donald Fergusson,	Dunnichen,	Leven,	25th August, 1837
21. Thomas Brown, D.D.,	Kinneff,	Edinburgh,	14th September, 1837
22. George R. Kennedy,	Dornoch,		28th November, 1837
23. A. A. Bonar, D.D.,	Collace,	Glasgow,	20th September, 1838
24. John Baxter, D.D.,	Dundee,	Blairgowrie,	5th November, 1838
25. Gustavus Aird, D.D.,	Croich,	Creich,	27th January, 1839
26. J. W. Taylor, D.D.,	Grangemouth,	Flisk,	7th May, 1839
27. William Watt,	Bucklyvie,	Norrieston,	20th May, 1839
28. John Montgomery, M.A.,	Arbroath,	Innerleithen,	June, 1839
29. William Laughton, D.D.,	Greenock,		18th July, 1839
30. William Ferrie, M.A.,	Anstruther,	America,	18th July, 1839
31. W. Brown Clark, D.D.,	Half Morton,	Quebec,	5th September, 1839
32. David Paton,	Chapelton,	Fettercairn,	11th February, 1841
33. Thomas Addis, D.D.,	Morningside,		17th December, 1841
34. Alexander Rankin,	E. Strathaven,		21st April, 1842
35. William G. Blaikie, D.D.,	Drumblade,	Prof., New Coll.,	22nd September, 1842
36. Robert Reid, M.A.,	Glasgow,	Banchory-Ternan,	22nd December, 1842
37. W. R. Moncur,	Botriphnie,	Liff,	19th January, 1843

EDINBURGH, 1*st December*, 1892.

INDEX TO NAMES OF PERSONS AND PLACES.

A

Abercromby, Dr., 460.

Aberdeen, the Earl of, generous gift of sites, 249, 251, 253, 365.

Aberdeen, interdict on the use of the Parish Churches of, 65; the triple Church at, 284; strong support by its laity to the Disruption movement, 461; its "Trinity *quoad sacra* Church" seized, 490; Woodside congregation ejected, 494; case of Union Church, 495; Bonaccord Church, 495; increase of prayer-meetings there since the Disruption, 750.

Aberdour, the people work gratuitously at the Free Church, 271; Claverhouse Tower at, 392.

Aberfeldy, Lord Breadalbane's liberality at, 467.

Aberlemno, the Free Church congregation of, 641.

Abernethy, of Bolton, death in the manse of the Rev. J., 139.

Adkins, Rev. Mr., of Southampton, 536.

Africa, South, the Mission to, 510; Sabbath-school contribution for Lovedale, 1870, 727; Sabbath-school contribution for waggons in 1876, 727; steamer and cloth sent to Livingstonia by Sabbath-school children, 1879, 727.

Agnew, Sir Andrew, of Lochnaw, at the Edinburgh meeting in 1843, 462; his contribution to church-building at Sheuchan, 489; at the Glasgow Assembly, 1843, 714.

Ainslie, Mr., Commissioner to the Earl of Moray, darkens the windows of the Free Church manse at Aberdour, 392.

Aird, Rev. Gustavus, Criech, 493.

Aitken, of Dyke, sacrifices at the Disruption of the Rev. Mark, 178.

Aldcorn, Dr., on injury to health by site-refusing, 446; reference to, 653.

Alexander, Dr. Lindsay, offers the use of his place of worship to the Rev. C. J. Brown, 211.

Alexander, Claud, Esq., of Ballochmyle, 432; at the Edinburgh meeting in 1843, 462.

Alexander, Rev. Mr., of Chelsea, 483.

Alexander, Dr., of Kirkcaldy, deputed to Canada, 562.

Alness, revival there in 1840, 10.

America, Free Church deputation to Churches of, 1843, 547; cordial proposal from a meeting in, 549.

Anderson, of Kippen, trials and death of the Rev. William, 156.

Anderson, Rev. Mr., Madras, his letter to Dr. Duff, 508.

Anderson, General, R.A., 530.

Andrews, Mr., Mayor of Southampton, 537, 538.

Applecross, Ross-shire, preaching at, 1845, 660; site obtained in, 1848, 660, 661.

Applegarth, meeting held in 1843 at Dinwiddie, in the parish of, 69; remarkable incident of a "curling" game at, 757.

Arbirlot, accommodation provided for the minister of, 179; effect of the Disruption on the people of, 200.

Arbroath, seizure of Ladyloan Church at, 1845-48, 497.

Ardmillan, Lord, Judge of the Court of Session, 460; on the abolition of Patronage not conceding Spiritual Independence, 789.

Ardnamurchan visited by Dr. Begg after the Disruption, 373.

Ardoch, interdict on burial in the churchyard of, 367; its *quoad sacra* church, 491; spiritual concern mani-

fested at, during the Disruption time, 749.
Argyll, the Duke of, at the Edinburgh Meeting in 1843, 461; on the abolition of Patronage not conceding Spiritual Independence, 789.
Argyleshire, "floating" congregation from, 656.
Arnot, Rev. William, replies to Principal M'Farlane's motion to expel the *quoad sacra* ministers from the Presbytery of Glasgow, 80; a deputy to Canadian Churches, 562.
Arran, anecdote of the self-denial of a snuff-taker in, 304; "Separatists" in, 677.
Arthur, Miss, gives a church and manse at Markinch, 269.
Ashley, Lord (Earl of Shaftesbury), his Bill to abolish Post-office Sabbath work, 1850, 715.
Assynt, Sutherlandshire, a specimen of "The Men" in, 671.
Auchterarder case, 21, 30, 47.
Auld, Rev. Dr., Clerk of the Presbytery of Ayr, 518.
Australia, the Disruption how regarded in, 567.
Ayr, provision for worship after the Disruption at, 219.
Ayrshire, simple way of settling the controversy by a plain man of, 166; proprietors in, their refusal of sites, 473; evangelistic meetings in, 1844, 636.

B

Baillieston, Sabbath-school contribution for iron church at, 1874, 727.
Bain, Rev. Mr., at Glenisla, 1843, 587.
Bain, Niel, from Assynt, one of "The Men," 671.
Bain, Rev. Mr., of Coupar-Angus, reminiscences by, 763.
Bain, Rev. Mr., of Chapel Garioch, his testimony to permanent effect of the revival movements of 1860-61, 784.
Baird, of Cockburnspath, sacrifices made in 1843 by the Rev. Andrew, 183.
Balogh, Prof. Francis, University of Debreczin, 559.
Ballater, Deeside, site refused at, 411; hardships of its people, 412.
Ballantrae, 454-456.
Banchory-Ternan, provision for worship in 1843 at, 210.
Bannatyne, Rev. Mr., New Cumnock, statement by, 606.
Bannerman, Rev. Mr., at Dunedin, N.Z., 1854, 570.
Barbour, Mr. George F., Bonskeid, distinguished as a friend to the Sabbath-school teachers, 1882, 724.
Barra, island of, reference to, 697.
Barrhead, Paisley, its congregation ejected, 1843, 494.
Barry, accommodation after the Disruption of the minister of, 177.
Basle, Switzerland, address from ministers of, 1843, 551.
Bath, success of deputation at, 527.
Bayne, Rev. John, Canada, 561.
Beecham, Mr. John, 536.
Begg, view of the Stewarton case by the Rev. Dr. James, 44; his anecdote of a servant dismissed for entertaining a preacher, 365; his visit to Ardnamurchan, 373; and to Strontian, 374; on disputed *quoad sacra* churches, 484; his remarks on the Establishment's procedure regarding these churches, 486; mentions a curious *quoad sacra* law-case, 496; tells anecdote of a meeting at Gravesend, 526; his statement as to sympathy in England, 527; deputed to Canadian Churches, 562; gives an account of American enthusiasm, 565; at a non-intrusion meeting at Dumfries, 1840, 617; in Applecross, Ross-shire, 1845, 660.
Beith, Rev. Dr. Alexander, of Stirling, 496; referred to, 538; his remark on *quoad sacra* seizures, 497; his activity for supply to the Colonies, 560; his notes about the "Floating Church" in Loch Sunart, 655-57.
Belfast, Irish Presbyterian Assembly at, 1843, 544, 545.
Bellie, rapid erection of a wooden church at, 220.
Benbecula, *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 653; educational work in, by the Glasgow "Ladies' Association," 688.
Benholm, Kincardineshire, meetings for revival of religion at, 1842-43, 765, 770; its Free Church opened, 770.
Bethune, Mrs., of Blebo, Fifeshire, 463.
Berriedale, provision made in 1843 for worship at, 214; sufferings of the minister of, 185.
Bickersteth, Rev. Edward, referred to, 534.
Binney, Rev. Dr., 536.
Black, Rev. Mr., Kilsyth, his account of fresh revival movement there, 1860, 776.
Blackie, Messrs., publishers, Glasgow, 461.

Blackie, Prof. J. S., of Edinburgh, his characterisation of "The Men" in the Highlands, 675.
Blair, General Hunter, of Dunskey, 478, 479.
Blair, Miss Hunter, 480, 481.
Blairingone, Auchterarder, its *quoad sacra* church, 491.
Blairgowrie, the tent and first services at, 230.
Bohemia, Mission to the Jews in, 558; Sabbath-school contribution for, 1878, 727.
Bolton Parish Church preached vacant, 122, 139.
Bombay, 501; Missionary difficulties at, in 1843, 507.
Bonar, Rev. Dr. A. A., his testimony to a revival at Collace in 1840, 10; his experience at Collace, 17; testimony found by him on the blank leaf of a Bible, 166; assists at Communion in Glenisla, 1843, 587; at Ferryden, 1846, 773; at Finnieston, 1860-61, 779.
Bonar, Rev. Dr. John, his reasons for coming out in 1843, 145; his "reasons for religious people" quoted, 196; set apart to take charge of Colonial work, 571; his report in 1849, 571, 572; striking pre-Disruption sermon by, at Torwood, 1843, 619; salutary influence of Disruption in his parish, 746-47; character of his preaching, 749.
Bonar, James, Esq., W.S., biography of, 460.
Borrodale, Glen, *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 653.
Borrowman, Rev. P., benumbed by cold while preaching, 441.
Bothwell, the effect of the Disruption on the people of, 201.
Botriphnie, traces of Mr. Campbell's ministry at, 9.
Bouverie, Mr., M.P. for Kilmarnock, obtains a Sites' Enquiry Committee of the House of Commons, 411.
Bowden, provision for worship in 1843 made at, 213.
Bracadale, Skye, preaching at, 1842, 658.
Braco, favourable weather in 1843 at, 225.
Braco, Perthshire, no proper site to be got there at the Disruption, 457; effect of Disruption at, 639.
Braemar, 451; beneficial influence of the Disruption at, 640-41.
Breadalbane, the Marquis of, his liberality to the Free Church, 269; at the Edinburgh meeting in 1843, 461; his character and services to the Free Church, 464; his conduct as regarded sites, 465; his speech in the House of Lords, 466; his wide influence and substantial help, 467; at Exeter Hall, 531; his help at Kenmore, 1843-46, 750.
Breadalbane, the Dowager Marchioness of, church and manse built at Langton by her, 269; in 1843, her liberal subscription for a manse at Kinneff, 458.
Breadalbane, revival in 1816 at, 9.
Breadalbane, The, missionary schooner, her "log," 652-53; her annual visits to St. Kilda, 697.
Brewster, Rev. Dr., at Ferryden, 1846, 773; dying testimony of, 407.
Brewster, Sir David, attempt at his expulsion from the Principalship at St. Andrews, 792.
Bright, John, Esq., M.P., 537.
Broadford, Skye, preaching at, 1842, 659.
Brockie, Mr. William, Annandale, his testimony to the effect of evangelical preaching in 1843, 757-58.
Broomknoll, Airdrie, its *quoad sacra* church, 487.
Brougham, Lord, his simile to illustrate the inefficiency of the call, 21, 22.
Brown, Rev. Dr. Charles J., accommodation in 1843 to the congregation of, 211; preaches before the Assembly, 1844, on "Deepening of Personal Religion," 628-29; conspicuous effect of his Assembly sermon, 721; takes active part in Home Mission work, 738; reference to continued effect of his memorable Assembly sermon, 772.
Brown, of Roslin, Rev. David, his first service to a Free Church congregation, 108; his sacrifices at the Disruption, 177, 638.
Brown, of Langton, Rev. Dr. John, his church declared vacant, 122.
Brown, of St. John's, Glasgow, Rev. Dr. Thomas, his testimony as Moderator of the Glasgow Assembly to the blessings which followed the Disruption, 245; at Assembly of 1844, 631.
Brown, Peter, Esq., Glasgow, 461.
Brown, Rev. Thomas, of Dean Church, Edinburgh, his manse at Kinneff generously subscribed for, 1843, 458.

Brown, Rev. Mr., of Castle-Douglas, deputy from Committee of Convocation to Glenisla, 585; in Glenisla, 1843, 587.
Brown, Robert, Esq., of Fairly, 652.
Broun, Rev. Hugh M'Bryde, settled at Lochmaben, 1843, 758.
Bruce, Robert, Esq., of Kennet, at Keith, 1843, 703, 704.
Bruce, Rev. Dr. John, of Free St. Andrew's, Edinburgh, his ministrations requested by various former opponents on their death-beds, 755.
Brunton, Rev. Dr., Edinburgh, Professor of Hebrew, 510.
Bryden, Mr., of Ochiltree, gives a site, 457.
Buccleuch, the Duke of, opposition at Thornhill by, 262; opposes Free Church meetings on his property, 431; returns no answer to an appeal through Dr. Chalmers, 439; yields at Wanlockhead, 444; his honourable and fair conduct towards his tenantry, 445.
Buchan, Rev. William, of Hamilton, his labours after the Disruption, 375; in a deputation to England, 527.
Buchan, George, of Kelloe, 462.
Buchanan, Rev. Dr. Robert, of Glasgow, moves the Independence Resolutions in 1838, 31; his feelings about going out, 145; his retrospect as to the great success of the Disruption, 580; its steady financial progress reported by (1867), 300; speaks at a meeting in Glasgow for the formation of a Young Men's Christian Association, 1842, 644; at Inverness Assembly, 1845, 651; active in Home Mission work, 1844-60, 739; reports marked success from evangelical agencies in Glasgow, 1861, 743; on permanent effect from the revival movements of 1860-61, 785, 786; on attempts to avert the Disruption, 789; on the "steadiness" of the Sustentation Fund, 794; how characterised as a leader, 787.
Buchanan, Allan, Esq., Glasgow, 461.
Buchanan, William, Esq., Glasgow, 461.
Buchanan, James, Esq. of Woodlands, Glasgow, 461.
Buchanan, Rev. Dr. James, Professor, New College, Edinburgh; letter to Dr. Burns, of Toronto, 564; on revival movements of 1860-62, 774, 775.
Buist, Dr., an American, his reference to Free Church stations on the Continent of Europe, 558.
Bunting, Mr., 528.
Bunting, Mr. Percival, Manchester, solicitor, reminiscences by, 533-40.
Bunting, Rev. Dr. Jabez, 535.
Burghead, provision made for worship in 1843 at, 218.
Burnet, of Monboddo, anecdote of Captain, 349; his generosity to the Free Church, and Dr. Chalmers' visit to him, 350 (*note*).
Burns, Rev. Dr. William, of Kilsyth, revival at Kilsyth under his ministry, 8; his thoughts of the impending Disruption, 60; his recollections of the Disruption, 93; his farewell sermon, 111; his first sermon to a Free Church congregation, 112; his leaving the manse, 135; his retrospect, 148, 404; Disruption reminiscences by, 578; his comparative view of ministerial *status* before and after the Disruption, 603; anecdote by, illustrating a *need* for the Disruption, 746.
Burns, Rev. Dr. Thomas, of Monkton (nephew of the poet), his first service to a Free Church congregation, 109; founds the Colony of Otago, New Zealand, 1848, 569.
Burns, Islay, Esq., Glasgow, 461.
Burns, Rev. James C., of Kirkliston, in London Wall Church, 1843, 528; his account of "miniature Disruption" in London, 529.
Burns, Rev. Dr., of Paisley, in North America, 1843, 546; his zeal for religion in the Colonies, 560; passed over for convenership of the Colonial Committee, 561; his enthusiastic reception as a deputy in Canada, 562; Professor at Toronto, 564.
Burns, Messrs., merchants, Glasgow, their munificence to the Home Mission cause there, 743.
Burns, Rev. William C., evangelist and missionary, his memorable sermon at Kilsyth, 1839, 773.
Bute, the Marquis of, dismisses his head gardener for adhering to the Free Church, 362; his procedure as to sites, 1843, 605; his marked change of feeling, 1843-49, 606.

C

Caffraria, South Africa, native meeting at, 1843, 511.
Cairns, Rev. Dr., of Cupar, at Melbourne, Australia, 568; his account of Colonial experience and success,

572, 573 ; revisits Scotland, 573 ; his striking speech at the Assembly in 1865, and final return to Australia, 573-76.
Caithness, all noted for their piety join the Free Church in, 163 ; gratuitous labours of the people in a parish of, 271 ; favourable weather in, 1843, 224 ; results of the Disruption in, 650 ; "Moderatism" in, 676-77.
Calcutta, questions raised there by the Disruption, 501 ; missionary difficulties at, in 1843, 505, 506 ; generous contributions made there, 508 ; a new Institution founded, 508, 509 ; Hindoo conversions, and hostile native movement, 511 ; comparative statement of mission efforts before and after the Disruption, 513.
Calder, Angus, one of "The Men" in the Highlands, 671.
Calder, William, one of "The Men," his testimony against the "Separatists," 678.
Callander, Perthshire, in 1843, 471.
Cambridge, the Free Church deputation at, 1843, 540.
Campbell, Rev. Mr., his ministry at Botriphnie, 9.
Campbell, Lord, his dictum on the relation of Church and State, 27, 28.
Campbell, Alexander, Esq., of Monzie, gives churches at Monzie and Dalmally, 269 ; at the Edinburgh meeting in 1843, 462.
Campbell, of Berriedale, Rev. Samuel, his sufferings at the Disruption, 185 ; his labours in Islay, 374.
Campbell, of Kiltearn, Rev. Duncan, revival at Lawers under, 9 ; his sacrifices and dying testimony, 407.
Campbell, of Tarbat, revival in Glenlyon under the Rev. David, 9.
Campbell, Rev. David, Tarbat, 493.
Campbell, Colonel, of Possil, 475, 476.
Campbell, the late Mrs., of Possil, her bequest to the congregation at Torosay, 664.
Campbell, William, Esq., Glasgow, 461.
Campbell, Rev. Dr., Established Church minister in Ayrshire, his honourable conduct as to a site, 474.
Campbell, Dr., 653.
Campbell, George, schoolmaster, Sutherlandshire, one of "The Men," 672.
Campbelton, provision for worship in 1843 at, 217.
Candlish, Rev. Dr. R. S., his sentiments on the watchword of the Free Church, 5 ; reminds the first Free Assembly of their responsibility, 197 ; declares that the position of the Free Church has not been hastily taken up, 146 ; opens Free St. George's, Edinburgh, 287 ; will see how his brethren are provided for before he accepts the stipend offered him, 389 ; recollection by a worshipper in the brick church in which he first preached, 288 ; his labours in the cause of education, 322 ; his views of Normal Schools and Universities, 325 ; at Wanlockhead, 440 ; at Cambridge, 525 ; at Manchester, 538 ; at Oxford, 538-40 ; his sense of responsibility from the *éclat* obtained among other Churches, 554-58 ; incident in his early career (of nomination to a Canadian charge), 561 ; his hopeful forecast in 1843 as to Free Church success, 579 ; on the peculiar responsibilities of the Free Church, 1844, 613 ; on regard for the Lord's Day, 713 ; alarmed by railway Sabbath desecration, 715 ; Convener of Committee on Sabbath Schools, 1849, 722 ; speech at the Assembly, 1852, on the heightened duty of the Church, 624-25 ; at the Assembly, 1844, on personal religion, 627-31 ; moves approval of Report on Evangelistic Deputations, 1844, 636 ; speaks at a great meeting in Glasgow for the formation of Young Men's Christian Associations, 1842, 644 ; enforces an "appeal" from the Highlands, 649 ; his characterisation of "The Men" in the Highlands, 666 ; at union with the "Original Seceders," 730 ; takes a lead in Home Mission plans, 738 ; had sought to avert the Disruption, 1841, 788 ; his characteristic mental qualities, 787.
Canada, Disruption in the Synod of, 561 ; feeling of Highlanders in, 565 ; incidents of its Disruption time, 1844, 566.
Canonbie, tent erected on its Moor, 431 ; interdict from the Duke of Buccleuch there, 431 ; site refused at, 431-36 ; the gravel pit, 432 ; a minister settled, 436 ; Rev. Mr. Innes dies through exposure at, 447.
Capadose, Dr., 553.
Cargill, provision made for worship in 1843 at, 213.
Cargill, Rev. Donald, the well-known, referred to, 619.
Carment, Rev. David, of Rosskeen, his forefathers, 1 ; his baptism and his

grandson's, 4; his testimony to a revival in 1841, 11; anecdotes of a parishioner threatened for receiving her pastor into her house, 355; his visit to Sutherlandshire in November, 1843, 222; on hardships from site-refusing, 446.
Carmylie, hardships of the minister of, in 1843, 179; how a site was obtained at, 263; striking death of a farmer who had returned to the Establishment, 266; conversation between two elders—Establishment and Free Church, 198.
Carnwath, revival movement at, 1860, 775.
Carrubber's Close, Edinburgh, mission when begun at, 774.
Castle Moyle, *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 653.
Catrine, liberality of the working people at, 270.
Chalmers, Rev. Dr. Thomas, his lectures on Church establishments, 26; moves the Independence Resolutions of 1839, 31, 32; his activity in the preparations for the Disruption, 81; his address at the opening of the Free Assembly, 95; his announcement of the scheme for a Sustentation Fund, 292, 303; he reports progress at the first Assembly, 295; his faith in the power of littles, 299; his anecdotes, 303, 304, 306, 308; he sets on foot the Education Scheme, 311; opens the New College by an address in the brick church, 328; preaches a Communion sermon there, 288; opens his house for the first Free Church service at Morningside, 109; on hard sayings by Free Churchmen, 430; writes to the Duke of Buccleuch, 438; interests the Countess of Effingham about Uyasound as "the Ultima Thule of Scotland," 459; effect of his influence as a professor before the Disruption period, 459; his statement at Inverness, 1845, 467; remarks as to diminished hostility after the Disruption, 468; his Church Extension movement, 1834-41, 485; pointed remark by, 521; his appreciation of sympathy from English Churchmen, 527; welcome to D'Aubigné, 1845, 552; his confidence of financial success for the Free Church, 608; his claim of National as compared with Sectarian benefit by the Disruption, 623; at Conference on Personal Religion, Assembly of 1844, 630; his diary in the above reference, 632; appeal for increased prominence to the "*lay* element," 1844, 645; on the growth of Sabbath desecration, 1864, 717; renewed Home Mission work by, 1844, 735-39; encouraged by success in the West Port, 737; his death referred to, 738; how to be characterised as a leader, 787.
Chalmers, Rev. Prof., of London, on American deputation, 1843, 546.
Christie, C. M., Esq., of Durie, his application of a soldier's experience, 185; at the Edinburgh meeting in 1843, 462.
Clark, William Towers, Esq., Glasgow, 461.
Clark, Rev. Mr., of Aberfeldy, 653.
Clark, Rev. Mr., of Half-Morton, with a non-intrusion deputation at Applegarth, 757.
Cleghorn, Sheriff, 460.
Cleish, device to prevent the people from getting sand, 258.
Clerk, of Penicuik, Sir George, at first refuses a site, 261.
Cochrane, Rev. Mr., of the Pleasance Church, Edinburgh, on revival movements there, 1860-61, 778.
Cockburn, Lord, 484; his remarks as to scenes at Tanfield Hall, 553; his retrospective view of the Disruption, 598-600.
Cockburnspath, petty annoyance to the congregation at, 353; trials of the minister of, 183.
Coll, island of, site refused in, 422; revival in, 664.
Collace, revival in 1840 at, 10; tent-preaching and favourable weather in 1843, 228.
Collace, effect of evangelistic deputation at, 1844, 638.
Collins, William, Esq., Glasgow, 461.
Collessie, parish of, Fifeshire, in 1843, 470-71.
Colonies, effect of the Disruption in the, 560.
Colquhoun, Lady, her testimony to the effect of the Disruption on the people of Luss, 201.
Constantinople, Sabbath-school contribution for, 1873, 727.
Continent of Europe, addresses from various Churches in, 551.
Cook, Rev. Dr. George, brings Dr. Welsh's protest before the Assembly, 173.

Cook, Rev. Dr., of St. Andrews, favouring a libel against Principal Brewster, 1843, 792.
Cormick, Rev. Mr., of Kirriemuir, his open-air preaching, 1848, 708.
Couper, Rev. Dr., of Burntisland, deputed to Canadian Churches, 562.
Cousin, David, Esq., architect, plans a church for a three-cornered site at Saltcoats, 284.
Coutts, liberality of Mrs., 303; her visit to the Bridge-of-Earn, 243.
Cowan, Charles, Esq. (M.P. for Edinburgh), presents a site to the Free Church at Penicuik, 261; reminiscences by, 577-78.
Cowan, Lord, Judge of the Court of Session, 460.
Cowan, John, Esq., Beeslack, distinguished as a friend of Sabbath schools, 1874, 723.
Cowgate Home Mission, Edinburgh, 738.
Cowie, of Huntly, Rev. Mr., traces of his ministry, 9.
Cox, Rev. Dr., of Hackney, 536-37.
Craig, of Rothesay, first sermon to a Free Church congregation by the Rev. Robert, 118.
Craig, Rev. Mr., of Sprouston, farewell discourse by, 1843, 469.
Craigie, L., Esq., of Glendoick, at the Edinburgh meeting in 1843, 462; at Keith, 1843, 703.
Crailing, the farewell to the Establishment at, 106; thunderstorm during service at, 226.
Crawford, James, Esq., elder, 538.
Crawfurd, Howieson, Esq., of Crawfurdland, 432, 462.
Crawford, James, Esq., W.S., biography of, 460.
Cray, Glenisla, station opened at, 1843, 586.
Creich, parish of, its benefits from the Disruption, 681.
Crichton, Esq., the vituperation directed against D. M. M., 61.
Crichton, William, Esq., R.N., Glasgow, 461.
Crichton, Maitland Makgill, Esq., 462; his influence in Fifeshire, 463; at Manchester, 1843, 537; representative of the Free Church at Belfast, 545.
Croich, provision for worship in 1843 at, 218.
Cromarty, carrying forth of stools from the Parish Church, 227; favourable weather in 1843, 224-26; persecution of Free Church people in, 358.
Cromarty, its jail broken into, 449.
Cubitt, Mr. George, 536.
Culsalmond, incidents of the Disruption period at, 703.
Cumming, of London, Rev. Dr., his prognostication of the number that would come out at the Disruption, 86.
Cumming, Charles, Esq., 451.
Cunningham, D.D., Rev. Principal William, his anxiety that Lord Aberdeen's Bill might be found sufficient, 145; reports to the Assembly in 1845, the completion of the scheme for raising £20,000 for the New College, 335; in deputation to England, 525; at London Wall Church, 531; in London, 1843, 543; in North America, 1843, 545-47; at the General Assembly, 1848, 553; an American opinion of the Disruption stated to, 622; at Assembly of 1844, 631; speaks at a meeting in Glasgow for the formation of Young Men's Christian Associations, 1842, 644; his remarks as to Report on Intemperance, 1847, 719; his interest in revival movements in 1860-61, 778; how characterised as a leader, 787.
Cunningham, of Coldstream, Mr. James, his generous help given to the Free Church, 275.
Cunninghame, David, a Home Mission visitor in Glasgow, 741.
Cupar, Presbytery of, Fifeshire, its numerous influential supporters of Disruption principles, 463.
Cuthbert, Mr., at Ochiltree, gives accommodation, 457.
Cuthbertson, Allan, Esq., Glasgow, 461.

D

Dalgleish, James Ogilvie, Esq., of Woodburn, Fifeshire, 463.
Dalgleish, Capt. Archibald, 463.
Dalarossie, parish of, "Separatism" in, 680.
D'Aubigné, Dr. Merle, of Geneva, 482; struck by the "life and earnestness" made manifest through the Disruption, 747; at Tanfield Hall, 1845, 552.
Davidson, of Kilmalie, Rev. Thomas, his sacrifices in 1843, 179; his subsequent hardships, 238; his health gives way under them, 346.

Davidson, of Latheron, Rev. George, his labours at Latheron, 14 ; his last service in the Established Church, 101 ; his narrative of the building of the Free Church, 273 ; his leaving the manse, 136 ; of extract from biography, 476 ; his trouble from Separatist meetings under some of "The Men," 678 ; his visit to Alex. Gair's death-bed, 682 ; his account of revival movements in 1860, 779-81.

Davidson, Rev. Dr. G. R., of Free Lady Glenorchy's, Edinburgh, pre-Disruption anecdotes of, 702 ; incidents of his preaching in the North, 703 ; at Keith, Strathbogie, 1843, 704 ; on the effect of Disruption there, 705, 706.

Davidson, Rev. Mr., of Broughty-Ferry, at Keith, Strathbogie, 1843, 704.

Daviot, parish of, 677 ; "Separatists" in, 679.

Deskford, accommodation of the minister of, after the Disruption, 177 ; those who would wait till they saw, 166 ; anecdote of a poor woman, 170.

Deskford, revival movement at, 1860, 776-77.

Dewar, of Fochabers, Rev. David, his account of the breaking of the interdict by Dr. Guthrie, 34.

Dickie, of Dunlop, Rev. Matthew, his sacrifices in 1843, 390.

Dickson, William, Esq., elder, Edinburgh, his account of the revival in Skye in 1843, 203 ; his notes on Sabbath-school progress, 721 ; edits the *Children's Record*, 1850, 722 ; Convener of Committee on Sabbath Schools, 1855, 722 ; his report in 1882, 724.

Dickson, Mr., of Hartree, at the Edinburgh Meeting in 1843, 462.

Dinwoodie Green, Applegarth, remarkable "curling" game incident at, 757 ; other results of the same occasion there, 758

Dodds, of Humbie, Rev. James, his recollections of the walk to Tanfield, 93 ; difficulty of getting a place to preach in, 223 ; recollections of Humbie Dean, 289 ; exposed to indignities, 391.

Donald, Miss, of Glenbervie, at Kilwinning, Ayrshire, originates a movement in aid of Free Church extension, 457.

Dornoch, visit of a deputation to the Presbytery of, 64,

Douglas, of Muthill, Rev. William, his account of the building of the Free Church there, 277.

Dow, of Greenock, Dr., gives a site at Saltcoats, 254.

Drumfork, Glenisla, 586.

Drumlanrig, 438.

Drummond, of Forgandenny, Rev. James, how he procured a site, 255 ; his privations in regard to residence, 341.

Drummond, Rev. Mr., Kirkmichael, 583.

Dryfesdale, Disruption preaching at, 758.

Duff, Rev. Dr. Alexander, 501, 502, 503 ; preaches at Glenisla, 597 ; his remarks as to financial success in the Free Church, 607 ; on progress of education in the Hebrides, 686 ; his reminiscences of "Moderatism" in pre-Disruption times, 701 ; on union with the "Original Seceders," 1852, 732 ; anecdote by, illustrating former niggardliness towards Missions, 794.

Duirness, Sutherlandshire, Communion seasons and influence of "The Men" at, 668-673.

Dumfries, amount of collections for Free Church and Establishment purposes made on the same day at, 331.

Dumfries, Non-intrusion meeting disturbed at, 1840, 617, 618.

Dumfriesshire, evangelistic meetings in, 1844, 636 ; revival movement in, 1860-62, 774-76.

Dunbar, its Belhaven Church seized, 1843, 494.

Dunbeath, no shelter allowed to be erected by the adherents of the Free Church at, 235.

Dunblane, recognition of the kindly offices of the United Secession by the congregation of, 212.

Dunbog, story from, showing how a minister should not preach better if he is worse paid, 164.

Duncan, of Ruthwell, Rev. Dr. Henry, he breaks the interdict, 35 ; his behaviour when the Synod of Dumfries expelled the *quoad sacra* ministers, 80 ; proposal made to him to remain in the Establishment, 386 ; his sacrifices in 1843, 186, 391 ; his taking leave of the Establishment, 102 ; he leaves the manse, 132 ; his labours in the Free Church, 376 ; and experience there, 399 ; his dying testimony, 406.

Duncan, Mrs Henry, her interview with Mr. Elliot, author of the Horæ Apocalypticæ, 401.
Duncan, of Cleish, Rev. W. W., his thoughts about impending Disruption, 60; his leaving the manse, 136.
Duncan, of Kirkpatrick-Durham, Rev. G. T. C., his recollection of the walk to Tanfield, 94.
Duncan, Rev. Dr. John, Professor of Hebrew, New College, at Assembly of 1844, 631.
Duncan, Rev. Thomas, settled at Lockerbie, 1843, 758.
Dundee, revival in 1836-39 at, 11; anecdote of an aged woman in, 171; accommodation of St. David's congregation in 1843, 214.
Dunlop, Alexander Murray, Esq., M.P. for Greenock, draws up the Claim of Right, 47; his impression of the walk to Tanfield, 94; his exposure of an attempt to remove from the poor-roll any who might contribute to the Free Church, 363; special notice of his services, 460; reference to his biography, 460; his statement regarding Sir James Graham's policy, 468; remark as to Dr. Chalmers' sanguine expectations, 608; how characterised as an adviser and leader, 787.
Dunlop, Henry, Esq. of Craigton, 461.
Dunnichen, benefits of the Disruption at, 641.
Durness, a Sabbath at, 240.
Duthil, hardship of worship in open air at, 413; parish of, 677; "Separatists" in, 679.
Dyke, accommodation of the minister of, in 1843, 178.
Dykes, of Leadshead, James, and his ancestors, 3.

E

Easdale, Argyllshire, *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 653.
Edinburgh, its local associations, 4; sacrifices by inhabitants of, to support the Free Church, 303; marked revival of evangelical religion among the upper circles in, 459; strong support given there to the Free Church by leading laymen, 459-461; influential meeting of landed proprietors at, favourable to Free Church principles, in 1843, 461; seizure of Lady Glenorchy's Church at, 1845, 497; Ladies' Association for the Training of Highland Students formed at, November, 1850, 684; its Town Council petitions against Post-office Sabbath work, 1850, 715.
Edgar, Rev. Mr., of Memus, in Glenisla, 1843, 587; on deepened religious feeling since the Disruption, 752; statement by, 1843, 639.
Edmondston, of Ashkirk, Rev. John, his trials after the Disruption, 339.
Edmonstone, Sir A. Bart., Kilsyth, 603.
Edwards, Rev. Mr., Professor of Divinity in the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church, at Glasgow, 1843, 621.
Edzell, a site refused to the people of, 236; attempt to prevent their getting one, 237.
Effingham, the late Countess of, her liberality toward struggling congregations, 458; reference to, 532; originates Home Mission at Cowgatehead, 739.
Eglinton, the Earl of, refuses a site at Ardrossan, 254; his impartial behaviour as to sites after the Disruption, 473-74.
Eig, island of, floating manse at, 420; a site refused in, 420.
Elder of Walls, Rev. John, his leaving his manse, 133.
Elder, Rev. Dr. Robert, of Edinburgh, afterwards of Rothesay, 538; at a Non-intrusion Meeting at Dumfries, 1840, 617; at Assembly of 1844, 633; his statement as to Mr. M'Bride's labours in the West Highlands, 1845-64, 663-64.
Elliot, Rev. E. B., author of the Horæ Apocalypticæ, his prejudice against the Free Church, 401.
Ellon, revival there in 1843, 12; provision made for worship in 1843, 210.
England, the deputation to, 527.
Enterkin, the Pass of, 439.
Eriskay, island of, Hebrides, its educational wants in 1852, 684.
Errol, the farewell to the Establishment, 104; first service in connection with the Free Church, 115; treatment of paupers in, 364.
Erskine, Dr., continued effect of his evangelical influence in Edinburgh, at the Disruption period, 459.
Eskdalemuir, meeting held by a deputation in 1843, 69.
Ewart, Mrs., a "second Jenny Geddes," at a disturbed Non-intrusion Meeting at Dumfries, 1840, 618.
Ewes, meeting held by a deputation in, 1843, 69.

F

Fairbairn, Rev. Principal, his anticipation of the Disruption at Salton, 384; his report on Sabbath Observance, 1843, 714-15.

Fairlie, provision for worship in 1843 at, 215; Lord Glasgow takes the school of, 311.

Farmer, Thomas, Esq., Treasurer of Wesleyan Foreign Mission, 536.

Farquharson, Mr. Thomas, Coldside, Glenisla, farmer, made chairman of a Non-intrusion meeting there, 1849, 592.

Farr, last service in the Parish Church of, 101; worship in the open air at, 221; persecution by the Duke of Sutherland of the minister of, 181; "Separatists" in, 1843, 679.

Ferguson, of Maryton, Rev. A., his removal from the manse, and death next day, 141.

Ferguson, Henry, Esq., Dundee, elder, 545.

Ferguson, John, in St. Kilda, 691.

Ferguson, Rev. Mr., Drumfork, 586.

Ferguson, Rev. Mr., of Alyth, 589.

Fergusson, Rev. Mr., Dunnichen, at Montreux, 557; statement by, 1843, 641; on deepened religious feeling since the Disruption, 752.

Ferintosh, Glen Urquhart, Communion seasons at, 667.

Ferryden, revival movement among the fishermen at, 1846, 773; memorable religious awakening there in 1860, 781-84.

Fifeshire, interesting case of a proprietor in, 475; revival movements in, 1860-61; 776.

Findlater, of Durness, Rev. William, his leaving his manse, 135, 342.

Findlater, Rev. Eric, of Lochearnhead, his recollections of his father's leaving the manse of Durness, 342; his account of a visit to Durness, 240; his labours after the Disruption, 379; account of Highland Communion seasons by, 668-73; his reference to Antinomian views among some of "The Men," 677-78.

Finnieston, a revival movement at, 1860-61, 779.

Fintray, meeting broken up by the laird's factor, 71.

Fleming, John Park, Esq., Glasgow, 461.

Flisk, last service in the Parish Church of, 101; provision made for worship at, 213; how a site for church and manse was procured at, 254; persecution of those who joined the Free Church at, 358; the intelligence of its farm overseers, 450; revival movement at, 1860, 776.

Florence, theological library at, 555; its Theological College, 555-56.

Flyter, of Alness, Rev. Alexander, his testimony to revival in 1840, 10; his recollection of the walk to Tanfield, 93.

Fodderty, Ross-shire, 677.

Foote, of Aberdeen, Rev. Dr. James, early experience of, 1.

Forbes, Rev. Mr., Woodside, Aberdeen, report by, 1844, 639.

Forfar, the Free Church Congregation of, 641.

Forfarshire, zealous support there, by Mr. Lyon of Glenogil, at Tannadyce, 463; a revival movement in, 1868, 777.

Forgandenny, a tent provided at, two heritors threaten those who resort to it, 229; difficulties in obtaining a site at, 255; attempt to prevent the people from getting sand, 259; leaving the manse of, 341.

Forman, of Innerwick, Rev. Adam, his first service to a Free Church congregation, 109.

Fort Augustus, provision for worship in, 1843, 217.

Fortingall, the people of, forced to remove their tent from the common, 233.

Forrester, Rev. Mr., of Sorby, afterwards of Paisley, 563.

Fountainbridge Home Mission, Edinburgh, 738.

France, disruption in the Protestant Church of, 1848, 553.

Fraser, Mr. Arthur, Calcutta, 509.

Fraser, Rev. Alex., of Kirkhill, Disruption notes by, 658; how widely esteemed in the Highlands, 680.

Frazer, Janet, devotes her property at Thornhill to the Free Church, her story told in America, 262.

Fullarton, Rev. A. C., Glasgow; his account of "Ladies' Association" work among the Hebrides, 688; and description of its various localities, 688-89.

Fuller, Rev. Andrew, 537.

G

Gair, Alexander, one of "The Men" in the Highlands, 677-78; his "Separatism" continued after 1843, 679; gives way at the last, 681-82.

Galston, improved morality there since the Disruption, 751.
Gardyne, James, farmer in Carmylie, his retort suggesting that a horse had been interdicted, 264.
Gardyne, Mrs., evicted from her cottage at Carmylie because she gave a site to the Free Church, 264.
Garioch, of Old Meldrum, Rev. George, his leaving the manse, and consequent privations, 343; his Evangelical preaching in early pre-Disruption times, 702.
Gartly, treatment of paupers adhering to the Free Church at, 364.
Garvald, provisions made for worship in 1843 at, 212.
Gasparin, Count, at the General Assembly, 1848, 553.
Geneva, 556.
Gemmel, Mr. John, farmer at Garple, furnishes a banner which had seen Drumclog for a meeting at Muirkirk, 283.
Ghospara, India, 505.
Gibson, of Kirkbean, Rev. R., his experience in the summer of 1843, 243; his inconvenient residence, 339; on deepened religious feeling since the Disruption, 751-52.
Gibb, Rev. Mr., presented to Glenisla, 1843, 590.
Gillies, Rev. Mr., in Glenisla, 1843, 587.
Gillespie, Mr. Alexander, London, elder, 532.
Girthon, difficulty of obtaining a site at, 257; opening of the Free Church at, 285.
Glasgow, the Earl of, ousts the Free Church from a schoolhouse at Fairlie, 215; as to Barrhead Church, 495.
Glasgow, strong support by the laity of, in 1843, to the Free Church movement, 461; its *quoad sacra* churches, 488; case of Hope Street Church, 495; the Assembly at, in 1843, 621; the Young Men's Christian Association originated at, 1842, 643-44; Ladies' Association for the "Training of Highland Students" formed at, 1850, 684; its Town Council petitions against Post-office Sabbath work, 1850, 715; statistics of intemperance in, 1846, 718; striking results of Free Church Home Mission work there, 739.
Glass, Rev. Mr., Bracadale, Skye, 658; preaching at Shieldag, 1845, 661.
Glen, Rev. Mr., of Benholm, makes an appeal to his people for revival of religion, 1842, 765; his continuous spiritual longings and efforts, 766-69; was typical in preaching, of a widespread influence from the Disruption movement, 770-72.
Glencairn, the parish of, referred to, 619.
Glenisla, Forfarshire, peculiar Disruption incidents in, 582-97; Non-intrusion meetings there, 1843-49, 583-96; its Free Church built, 1849, 596; a minister called to and ordained in it, 1850, 597; a time of revival there, 597; Disruption incidents in, 761-62.
Glenkens, memorable opening of a Free Church at, 1845, 618.
Glenlyon, revival in 1816 at, 9.
Glenorchy, Lady, her chapel and its associations, 497.
Goold, Rev. Dr., Edinburgh, at the union of his Church with the Free Church, 1876, 733-34.
Gordon, Rev. Dr. Robert, of Edinburgh, his reasons for going out, 145; preaches at Canonbie, 432; effect of his preaching in Edinburgh before the Disruption period, 459; referred to, 509; at Assembly of 1844, 631.
Gordon, the Duchess of, her complete isolation in the Establishment, 161; her opinion of the Moderates, 162; her treatment by Lord Aberdeen, 365; a large contributor to erection of Holyrood Home Mission Church, Edinburgh, 739.
Gordon, of Edderton, Rev. Donald, his sufferings and death from exposure, 382.
Gordon, Mr., of Glenkens, referred to, 619.
Graham, Sir James, his letter rejecting the appeal of the Church, 75; his and his friends' statement of reasons for refusing sites, 428-30.
Graham, Gillespie, Esq., of Orchil, his kindness to the people of Muthill, 279.
Grant, of Ayr, Rev. William, his narrative of a movement among the probationers, 127; heads a deputation of them to the Convocation, 129; interdicted from the use of his *quoad sacra* church, 110; proposal made to him to return to the Establishment, 386; opening of his Free Church, and singular coincidence of texts, 286; his testimony to the effect of the Disruption on the people of Ayrshire, 201; anecdotes by, 518.

Grant, of Ardoch, Rev. Samuel, his account of the effect of the Convocation on his people, 62; his comparative view of ministerial "*status*" before and after the Disruption, 603; report by, 1844, 639.

Grant, John, at Kildonan, elder, a first leader among "The Men" of the Highlands, 676.

Gravesend, London, meeting at, 526.

Gray, Rev. Andrew, of Perth, laments the loss of his schools, 309; deputed to the Canton de Vaud, 1845, 553; addresses by, on responsibilities of the Free Church, 1848, 613-14; his letters to his congregation during Assemblies 1840-44, 632-33; on Spiritual independence as essential to the Church, 790.

Greenock, first Free Church service at, 113; Communions in the temporary church at, 288; accommodation of the minister after the Disruption, 176; strong support by its laity to Free Church principles in 1843, 461; interdict at, 1843, 494.

Greig, Rev. Mr., of St. Ninian's, his comparative view of ministerial "*status*" before and after the Disruption, 603.

Grey, Rev. Dr. Henry, in deputation to England, at London Wall, 525-31; his statement as to peculiar responsibilities of the Free Church, 613; his closing address to the General Assembly, 1844, 642; opening address, 1845, 643.

Grierson, Rev. Dr. James, of Errol, efforts made to induce him to remain in the Establishment, 386; his leaving the manse, 137; his sacrifices in leaving the Establishment, 390; his last service in the Parish Church, 104; his first sermon to a Free Church congregation, 115; is exposed to indignities, 391; his comparative view of ministerial "*status*" before and after the Disruption, 602; on "Moderatism" in pre-Disruption times, 701.

Gualter, Rev. Mr., of Hawick, at Snizort, 1863, 667.

Guthrie, Rev. Dr. Thomas, breaks the interdict, 34; his opinion of the effect of the Disruption, 193; his account of his visits to Tongue and Cockburnspath, 182; his testimony to the content of Free Church ministers, 403; anecdotes of the people's liberality, 301; undertakes the conduct of the manse scheme, 347; his visit to Glasgow, 348; and to Fordoun, 349; his report in 1846, 349; anecdote of an opponent's opinion about manses, 351; scene at Canonbie, 434; at Wanlockhead, 441; statement by, in reference to Lord Aberdeen and Sir James Graham, 468; various Disruption incidents related by, 515-19; in deputation to England, 525; at London Wall Church, 531; in London, 1843, 543; anecdote by, 601; at a disturbed Non-intrusion meeting at Dumfries, 1840, 617, 618; his record as to popular enthusiasm in 1843, 620; speaks at a meeting in Glasgow for the formation of Young Men's Christian Associations, 1842, 644; Highland anecdote by, 651; sets agoing the Pleasance Home Mission, 738; incident of his Disruption preaching in Strathbogie, 754.

H

Haddington, the Earl of, his reply to a parish minister who would have him to prevent his tenant from giving the use of his barn to the Free Church, 233.

Haddington, its *quoad sacra* church, 490.

Hall, Mr., Braehead of Leslie, farmer, letter from, 702.

Hamilton, Rev. Dr. James, London, his account of the Convocation, 49; and of Dr. Welsh's sermon on the morning of the Disruption, 89; his account of Disruption incidents there, 523; at meeting in London, 1843, 543; on benefits due to the Disruption, 617.

Hamilton, John, Esq., advocate, his testimony to the persecution of the adherents of the Free Church, 358; biography of, 460.

Hamilton, Rev. Mr., of Saltcoats Gaelic Church, 489.

Hamilton, Mr. William, London, elder, 532.

Hanna, Rev. Dr. William, 538; on first difficulties of the West Port Home Mission, 737; sets agoing the Pleasance Home Mission, 738.

Harpe, Professor de la, 553.

Harris, island of, *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 653; schools opened there, 1851, 684; its minister in 1822, 691.

Hastings, Rev. Thomas, his testimony to a revival in 1841 at Wanlockhead,

12; sends away his family to Dumfries, 440; description of the cottage in which he lived, 440; at out-door preaching in 1843, 749.
Henderson, Rev. Dr., of St. Enoch's, Glasgow, 461; his zeal for religious supply to the Colonies, 561; in deputation from Assembly of 1844, 636.
Henderson, Mr. W., Aberdeen, his services in the Sabbath-school cause, 1870, 723.
Helmsdale, provision made for worship in 1843 at, 218; Hugh Miller's visit to, 222.
Heriot, Mr., of Ramornie, Fifeshire, at the Edinburgh Meeting in 1843, 462.
Heriots, The, of Ramornie, 463.
Hetherington, Rev. Dr. W. M., letter to his wife on the day of the Disruption, 388; his church and manse the first finished, 338; at Manchester, 538; account of the Assembly of 1844 by, 633-34; on Home Mission work, 647.
Highlands, the, zealous support there by Cluny Macpherson, 462; the Marquis of Breadalbane's example in, 466-67; interesting case of a Perthshire landed proprietor in, 473; various Disruption incidents in, 517; Free Church aid during the famine in, 1846, 654; religious revival there, 655; their appeal for supply of religious ordinances, 1844, 649; instances of Disruption zeal in, 649-50; subsequent condition of the Established Church in, 650-51; case of an Establishment missionary there, 651; requirements in Gaelic-speaking districts, 651; itinerant deputation sent to, headed by Rev. Dr. M'Donald, 652; encouragement to Gaelic students, 652; *The Breadalbane* schooner, 652-53; relief sent for famine in 1846, 654; eagerness for religious services, 655; the iron "Floating Church," 655-56; the old "store-house" at Resolis, 657; open-air meetings, 658; Skye, religious movement throughout, 1842, 658; Ross-shire, preaching in, 1845, 660; summary of results, 665; "The Men" and their influence characterised, 666-82; signal Communion seasons, 667; a fanatical movement of last century in the Highlands, due to Moderatism, 676; fanaticism checked by the Disruption, 677; tendency to Antinomian views, 677; subsequent strong attachment to the Free Church, 681; St. Kilda, results of the Disruption there, 691-9; incidents in a rural parish, 1843, 709.
Hill, Sir William, Madras, 510.
Hislop, Rev. Stephen, Nagpore, 510.
Hodge, Rev. Dr., of Princeton, U.S.A., 547-48; on the Free Church testimony, 621.
Hog, Esq., J. Maitland, of Newliston, gives a church and manse at Kirkliston, 269.
Hog, James Maitland, Esq., of Newliston, 462; at Keith, 1843, 703.
Holyrood Home Mission, Edinburgh, begun by St. Luke's F. C. congregation, 738.
Holland, address from Christian communities in, 1843, 551.
Hope, Rev. Peter, his hardships at Canonbie, 433.
Howie, Rev. Mr., his work in Glasgow, 743; on revival movement there, 1860-61, 779.
Humbie, provision for worship in 1843 at, 223; the worship in the tent at, 289; difficulties in procuring a site at, 253.
Hungary, Mission to the Jews in, 558.
Hunter, Rev. John, of Bath, his advocacy of Disruption principles, 526.
Huntly, ministry of Mr. Cowie at, 9; satisfactory report from congregation at, 1844, 638.
Hutchison, Rev. Mr., of Uddingston, afterwards of Johnstone, pre-Disruption anecdote by, 702; at Muirkirk, 1843, 709.

I

India, Children's "New Year Offering" for Madras, 1881-82, 727; Sabbath-school contribution for Nagpore, 1867, 727; Sabbath-school contribution for Jalna, 1871, 727; Sabbath-school contribution for Mission at Santal, 1875, 727; Sabbath-school contribution for Poona Orphans, 1880, 728; Sabbath-school Children's subscription for Madras, 1882, 728.
Inglis, of Edzell, Rev. Robert, his statement at the Convocation, 55; his first sermon after the Disruption, 236; his privations for want of a suitable residence, 345; anecdote of a blacksmith told by, 401.
Inglis, Mr. (afterwards Lord Justice-General), adverse to a libel against Principal Brewster, 1843, 792.

Inglis, Mr., of Baillies, Lochee, 452.
Ingram, Dr., of Unst, Shetland, the opposition he had to contend with, 458.
Innerwick, first Free Church Service at, 109.
Innes, Rev. George, of Deskford, his testimony to the revival of Gospel preaching, 7; his sacrifices at the Disruption, 177; his comparative view of ministerial "*status*" before and after the Disruption, 603; on "serious impressions due to the Disruption," 746.
Innes, Rev. Mr., of Canonbie, dies from effects of exposure, 447.
Iona, sufferings of the minister of, 184.
Ireland, Presbyterian Church of, her sympathy early shown to the Free Church, 544; North of, Free Church deputation in, 1843, 545; revival movement over the North of, 1859, and its influence in Scotland, 774-80.
Irvine, Rev. Dr., of Dunkeld, his testimony as to Sabbath observance among Dissenters, 714.
Irving, Rev. Lewis, gives help to the people of Wanlockhead, 444.
Irving, Dr. Moulin, oculist, 582.
Islay, island of, revival in, 664.
Italy, evangelical labours by Free Church ministers in: Rev. Dr. Stewart's labours, 554; Sabbath-school contribution for Genoa, 1881, 728.
Ivory, Lord, his decision as to the Barrhead Church case, 495.

J

Jameson, Sheriff, 460.
James, Rev. J. Angell, of Birmingham, 536; on the Disruption movement, 620.
James, Mr. J. A., London, alderman, 542.
Jedburgh, interesting Disruption incidents at, 758-60.
Jeffrey, of Girthon, Rev. Robert, his testimony to the revival of Gospel preaching, 7.
Jeffrey, Lord, his exclamation on hearing of the Disruption, 95.
Johnston, of New York, provides in part for a church at Kirkcudbright, 269.
Johnstone, efforts of the people of, in support of Free Church principles, 170.
Jollie, Rev. Thomas, of Bowden, his visit to Dumfriesshire in 1843, 68.
Jones, Rev, Dr., continued effect of his evangelical influence in Edinburgh at the Disruption period, 459; zeal of his congregation, 496; his old chapel (Lady Glenorchy's), unfortunately made *quoad sacra*, 498.

K

Keir, Dumfriesshire, sermon at, 1844, 636.
Keiss, provision for worship in 1843 at, 217.
Keith, Strathbogie, provision for worship in 1843 at, 210; memorable Communion season at, 1843, 703, 704.
Keith, Rev. Dr. Alexander, of St. Cyrus, lays the report of the Jewish Mission before the first Free Assembly, 98.
Kennedy, Rev. Dr., extract from his Life of Dr. M'Donald of Ferintosh, 667.
Kennedy, Rev. John, of Redcastle, how widely esteemed among Highlanders, 680.
Kennedy, Mr. Duncan, catechist, St. Kilda, 1853, 698.
Kenmore, Lord Breadalbane's liberality at, 467; consequences of the Disruption in, 750.
Kerr, Mr., of H.M. Office of Works, his account of St. Andrew's Church after the Disruption, 94.
Kidston, Richard, Esq., of Ferniegair, 461; prominent on behalf of Sabbath schools, 1869, 723.
Kilcalmonell, Kintyre, site and stones refused at, 453.
Kildonan, Sutherlandshire, origin of "The Men" in, 676.
Killen, Professor, of the Irish Presbyterian Church, head of deputation at Tanfield, 1843, 544.
Killin, Lord Breadalbane's liberality at, 467.
Kilmalie, hardships endured by the minister and people of, 179, 238.
Kilmodan, persecution of the adherents of the Free Church at, 368.
Kilmorack, parish of, 677.
Kirriemuir, provision made for worship in, 1843, 210.
Kilsyth, revivals in 1742 and 1839 at, 8; the farewell to the Establishment, 111; first Free Church sermon, 112; beadle adheres for one day to the Parish Church, 166; recollections of the meetings in the tent at, 287;

its weavers "strengthening their minister's hands," 450; referred to, 458; its *quoad sacra* church, 458; fresh revival movement at, 1860, 776.
Kiltarlity, visit of a deputation to, 64.
Kiltearn, Ross-shire, in 1843, 650.
Kilwinning, Ayrshire, zealous aid by female friends of the Free Church, originating there, 457.
King, Rev. Dr., of Glasgow, afterwards of Halifax, N.S., 563.
Kinneff, provision for worship in 1843 at, 213.
Kinnoul, Lord, contributors to the Free Church persecuted by the factor of, 361.
Kintore, first Free Church service at, 117; people compelled to build their church within flood-mark of the Don, 255.
Kintore, the Earl of, distinguished as a friend of Sabbath schools, 1878, 724.
Kippen, Rev. Mr., of Raasay, at Snizort, 1863, 667.
Kirk, Rev. John, of Arbirlot, his sacrifices at the Disruption, 179.
Kirkbean, post-Disruption meetings for revival of religion at, 765.
Kirkhill, rapid erection of a wooden church at, 220.
Kirkmaiden, accommodation of the minister of, in 1843, 178.
Knapdale, revival of religion in, 1844-45, 663.

L

Laird, Rev. Dr., of Portmoak, at Assembly of 1844, 630.
Lairg, persecution of the minister of, by the Duke of Sutherland, 188; treatment of paupers adhering to the Free Church in, 363.
Lamb, of Kirkmaben, Rev. John, his sacrifices at the Disruption, 178; his death accelerated by his labours in Stranraer, 382.
Lanark, siezure of St. Leonard's Church at, 496.
Lanarkshire, revival movements in, 1860, 775.
Landsborough, Rev. Dr. David, of Stevenston, his testimony to the revival of Gospel preaching, 7; his journal of the Convocation, 52; his thoughts of impending Disruption, 60; his feelings on the rejection of the Claim of Right, 77; incident in his walk to Tanfield, 94; his impression of the Free Assembly, 96; his first service to a Free Church congregation, 109; his sacrifices, 390; his labours after the Disruption, 376; exposed to indignities, 392; retrospect of the Disruption, 404; opens services at Kilwinning, 457; at Glenkens, 1845, 618.
Landsborough, Rev. Mr., of Kilmarnock, account by, 605-6.
Langholm, meeting held there by a deputation in 1843, 68.
Langton Parish Church preached vacant, 122; provision for worship after the Disruption, 216.
Larbert, influence of the Disruption at, 746-9.
Largo, provision made for worship in 1843, 219; tenants and others threatened by the heritors of, 356.
Largs, Parish Church of, closed by interdict against a meeting, 65.
Latheron, Kirk-session of, resolve to adhere to the Free Church, 164; last service in the Parish Church, 101; building of the Free Church, 273; attempt by a heritor to coerce the conscience of his grieve, 359; anecdote of a family broken up by religious convictions, 367; the congregation at, 476-7; in 1843, 650; referred to, 677; revival movement at, 1860, 779-81.
La Tour, Italy, Theological Library at, 555.
Laurieston Free Church, Glasgow, 644.
Leghorn, congregation at, 555.
Leifchild, Rev. Dr. John, of London, 536.
Lennox, Mr., of New York, provides in part for a church at Kirkcudbright, 269; his contribution in aid of the missionaries in India, 508; as a correspondent of Dr. Chalmers on Home Mission work, 737.
Lesmahagow, its traditions, 2; farewell to the Parish Church, 105; provision for worship in 1843, 223; service interrupted by rain, 225; workingman threatened by a heritor, 354; anecdotes of two elders of, 167.
Lethendy case, 22, 32.
Lewis, Rev. James, of Leith, his report concerning ejected teachers, 313; as to zeal in Canada, 563; on missionary contributions from Sabbath schools, 1844, 727.

Lewis, of Dundee, Rev. George, narrates the fall of the picture of William III. at Holyrood, 88; his thoughts concerning impending Disruption, 59; his course of six lectures, 61; his testimony to the motives which drew the people to the Free Church, 163.
Lintrathen, Mr. M'Cheyne's sermon at, 585.
Liverpool, the English Synod indicted to meet at, 1843, 529.
Lochalsh, Ross-shire, *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 653.
Lochbroom, the farewell to the Establishment, 104.
Lochcarron, preaching in, 1844, 663.
Lochlee, 451; Freemason Lodge at, 452; the teacher expelled, 452; tenants "summonsed" out, 453.
Lochs Parish Church preached vacant, 123.
Lockerby, meeting at, held by a deputation in 1843, 69.
Lockhart, Mr., of Laggan, Ballantrae, farmer, purchases a site for church, 455; his colloquy with Mr. White, 456.
Logan, of Lawers, Rev. John, preaches at Rannoch on an inclement Sabbath, 227.
Logan, of Eastwood, Rev. George, death in the manse of, 139.
Logie, the people of, refused permission to meet in a gravel-pit by the laird's factor, 234.
London, Presbytery of, in 1843, 523; the Presbyterian churches in, 530; auxiliary committee formed in, 532.
Long Island, Hebrides, 653; Dr. M'Donald sails from, to St. Kilda, 1822, 691; reference to, 697.
Lorimer, Rev. Dr. John G., of Glasgow, his impression of the Convocation, 54; his thoughts on impending Disruption, 58; his preparation for the Disruption, 17; his testimony to the effects of the Disruption on his people, 199; his sacrifices in 1843, 390; his subsequent labours, 375; referred to, 524; Convener of Committee on Continental Protestant Churches, 1844, 552; his comparative view of ministerial "*status*" before and after the Disruption, 604; his account of Home Mission work in Glasgow, 1846, 739.
Lumsden, Principal James, his sacrifices in 1843, 177.
Lumsden, Rev. Mr., of Barry, in a deputation at Benholm, 1842, 766.
Luss, craving for spiritual life among the people of, 162; the effect of the Disruption on them, 201.
Lybster, Caithness, its *quoad sacra* church, 490-1.
Lyon, G., Esq., of Glenogil, Tannadyce, his zealous support to the Free Church, 463; at Oxford, 538; at Cambridge, 540.

M

M'Adam, Rev. Mr., of Glenkens, referred to, 619.
M'Bean, Rev. A., of Greenock, interdicted from the use of his *quoad sacra* church, 494; his first service to a Free Church congregation, 113.
M'Bride, Rev. Peter, of Rothesay, his account of "revival" in Knapdale, 1845, 663; his labours among the Highlanders cut short by his last illness, 653.
M'Bryde, Rev. Mr., North Bute, his difficulties there in 1843, 605.
M'Cheyne, Rev. R. M., on connection with the Covenanters, 6; his denunciation of the system of restricting the preaching of the Gospel, 61; his testimony to revival in Dundee in 1836-39, 11; at the Convocation, 56; his thoughts on impending Disruption, 59; visits Deer and Ellon, 73; his view of the rejection of the Claim of Right, 76; his last work, 83; preaching in Glenisla, 584; his answer to an interdict from preaching before the Disruption, 748; as assistant at Larbert, 750.
M'Coll, Rev. Mr., his account of Home Mission Work in Glasgow, 739-44.
M'Cosh, Rev. Dr. James, of Brechin, his pamphlet on the Disruption, 151.
Macdonald, Rev. Dr. Robert, of Blairgowrie, attempts to hold a meeting at Fintray, 71; his scheme for erecting 500 schools, 314; anecdote of a meeting at Manchester, 317; of a meeting in London, 318; of his journey from Wick, 319; his report to the Assembly in 1844, 319; in Dr. Candlish's speech, 320; Dr. Grey, the moderator, thanks him, 320; undertakes to raise £10,000 for the New College, 329; his anecdote of keeping a shilling and losing a pound, 330; his travels with this object, 331; announces in 1845 the completion of his task, 332; suggests to Dr. Welsh a plan for raising £20,000 for the

same object, 332-6 : anxiety of his friends as to what was to come of his family in 1843, 388; his testimony to the content of Free Church ministers, 403.
Macdonald, Lord, refuses sites in Skye and Uist, 415.
M'Donald, Rev. Dr. John, of Urquhart, narrowly escapes deposition for preaching the Gospel out of his parish, 161; his visit to the Presbytery of Dornoch, 64.
Macfarlane, Principal Duncan, looks in March, 1843, without apprehension on the threatened Disruption, 86.
Macfarlan, Rev. Dr. Patrick, his forefathers, 1; signs the deed of demission, 97; his sacrifices in 1843, 176, 389.
M'Gillivray, Rev. Duncan, of Lairg, his trials at the Disruption, 188.
M'Indoe, Rev. R., of Galston, his experience of the summer of 1843, 242.
M'Innes, John, elder at Tobermory, his wrestlings in prayer, 194.
Mackay, Rev. Dr. A., his account of former Separatist meetings in the Highlands, 677-8.
Mackay, Joseph, of Reay, a leader among "The Men" in northern Caithness, adheres to the Establishment, 379.
Mackay, Rev. John, ordained missionary to St. Kilda, 1865, 699.
Mackenzie, Rev. D., of Farr, his experience during the Non-intrusion conflict, 17; the ground of his resolution to go out, 146; anecdote of his wife, 142; his last sermon in the Parish Church, 101; he conducts worship in the field, 222; his sacrifices in 1843, 181; Disruption reminiscences by, 579; his comparative view of ministerial *status* before and after the Disruption, 603; his experience of continued Highland "Separatism" in 1843, 679; testimony to benefits among Highlanders from the Disruption, 681.
M'Kenzie, Rev. Hugh M. and Rev. W., of Tongue, their sufferings in 1843, 182; ending in the death of the elder, 155.
M'Kenzie, Rev. Colin, of Shieldaig, his sacrifices in 1843, 180.
M'Kenzie, Mr., of Alrick, elder, narrative of Disruption incidents in Glenisla by, 582.
Mackenzie, Rev. Mr., of Beauly, 653.
Mackenzie, Rev. Colin, of Arrochar, 653.
Mackenzie, Mr. N., ordained as missionary in St. Kilda, 1830, 695; adheres to the Established Church, 1843, 695.
Makgill, Mrs., of Kemback, Fifeshire, and her daughters, 463.
Makgill, Mr. Maitland, at meeting in London, 1843, 543.
M'Intosh, Rev. C. C., of Tain, his testimony to revival in 1840, 10; how the news of the rejection of the Claim of Right reached Tain, 77.
M'Lauchlan, Rev. Dr. Thomas, of Moy, afterwards of Edinburgh, his recollection of the morning of the Disruption, 89; leaving the manse, 133; first service to a Free Church congregation, 110; deputy to Canada, 562; his account of "The Men" in the Highlands, 676; personal experience of difficulties caused by "Separatism" there, 679-80; at St. Kilda, 1850, 697; as convener of the Highland Committee, 1863-65, 699.
M'Lachlan, Rev. Simon, Cawdor, 493.
M'Lagan, Rev. Dr., Professor of Divinity, Aberdeen, 710.
Maclaren, Mr. Donald, Callander, signal part taken by, in 1843, 471-3.
Maclean, Mr., of Coll, dealing with his tenants, 422.
M'Lean, Rev. Duncan, of Kilmodan, his sufferings in 1843, 393.
M'Lean, Rev. Mr., of Glenorchy, 653.
Maclean, Rev. Mr., of Tobermory, 653.
M'Leod, Rev. Roderick, of Bracadale, his change of views, 8; his sacrifices in 1843, 179; anecdote of his wife, 143.
M'Leod, Rev. George, of Lochbroom, his labours after the Disruption, 377.
Macleod, Rev. Dr. Norman, is the first to break up the Church, by withdrawing from the Presbytery of Irvine, 79.
M'Millan, Rev. Angus, of Lochranza, his education, licence, and leaving the manse of Kilmory, 138.
Macrae, Rev. Mr., account of preaching in Lochcarron by, 663.
Macrae, Rev. Mr., of Braemar and Knockbain, statement by, 1843, 639.
M'Crie, Rev. Dr., Edinburgh, at the union of the Original Seceders with the Free Church, 1852, 730-1.
Macredie, Patrick Boyle Mure, Esq., of Perceton, 462; referred to, 530.

M'Vean, Rev. Donald, of Iona, his sufferings in 1843, 184.
Madderty, stones refused to the people of, 258.
Makellar, Rev. Mr., labours for two months at Johnstone, 170.
Makellar, Rev. Dr., Canonbie, 434.
Manson, Rev. John, of Fyvie, anecdote showing that those who remained behind were not all satisfied that they were right, 165.
Marnoch case, 22, 33; the parishioners leave the church of, 24.
Martin, Rev. Samuel, of Bathgate, his speech at the Presbytery of Linlithgow in March, 1843, 84; his anticipation of the consequences of the Disruption, 383; his leaving the manse, 134; his labours after the Disruption, 375.
Mather, Rev. William, of Stanley, the grounds of his resolution to go out, 146; anecdote of a minister who had turned back, 192.
Maule, Right Hon. Fox, his motion in the House of Commons, 75.
Meldrum, Mr., of Craigfoodie, Fifeshire, 463.
Melville, Rev. Mr., of Logie, Fife, his statement of post-Disruption advantages, 640.
Mellis, Rev. David B., of Tealing, his leaving the manse, 132.
Menmuir, paltry persecution of the people of, by an Episcopalian heritor, 235.
Methlic, how the people of, got their church and manse, 249.
Methven, anecdote from; "Shot to get a site," 272.
Middleton, J., Esq. of Torosay, attempt to bribe him to leave the Free Church, 359.
Miller, Hugh, Esq., editor of *The Witness* newspaper, his visit to Cromarty in 1843, 226; his visit to the Island of Eigg, 243; his description of a service at Helmsdale, 222; his account of a communion at Kilmalie, 239; his work in editing the *Witness*, 60; his memorable services, 460-1; his characterisation of "The Men" in the Highlands, 675.
Miller, Rev. James, of Monikie. conducts worship for nine years in a loft, 216.
Miller, Professor, 460; on Home Mission work, 646; how led to "go out" at the Disruption, 760-1.
Miller, Rev. Matthew, Canada, 561.
Miller, Rev. Patrick, of Dundee, at Keith, Strathbogie, 1843, 704.
Miller, Dr. A., reference to (in footnote), 761.
Miller, Rev. Dr. Samuel, of Glasgow, instances of his congregation's missionary liberality, 794.
Milne, Rev. John, of Perth, life of, by Dr. H. Bonar, 13; his conversation with a non-adhering minister in 1843, 518-9.
Milne, Mr. George, Dunnichen, elder, (afterwards chaplain of the Magdalene Aslyum, Edinburgh), 642.
Milroy, Rev. Andrew, of Crailing, his last sermon in the Parish Church, 106; his leaving the manse, 343; preaches during a thunderstorm, 226.
Mitchell, Mr., elder, Strathbogie, takes a lead in evangelical movements there, 1842, 753.
Moncrieff, Rev. Sir H. (the first), continued effect of his evangelical influence in Edinburgh at the Disruption period, 459.
Moncrieff, the Misses, of Southfield, Auchtermuchty, Fifeshire, 464.
Monikie, provision for worship in 1843, 216.
Monkton, its memorials, 2; first service in connection with the Free Church, 109; increase of prayer meetings at, since the Disruption, 750.
Monod, Rev. Frederick, at the General Assembly, 1844, 552; and 1848, 553; account of Assembly meetings in 1844 by, 635.
Monquhitter, provision made for worship in 1843 at, 214.
Monteith, Alex. Earle, Esq., Sheriff of Fife, reports on the increased expense of building in 1845, 281; sets on foot the scheme for erecting collegiate buildings, 329; reference to biography of, 460.
Montgomery, James, the poet, testimony of, in favour of the Free Church, 402.
Montgomerie, Matthew, Esq. of Kelvinside, Glasgow, 461.
Montrose, interdict at, 1844, 494.
Monzie, the wooden church at, 288.
Moray Church Home Mission, Edinburgh, 738.
Morningside, first Free Church service at, 109.
Mortimer, Rev. Thos., B.D., London, 526.

Mortimer, Rev. Mr., of Gray's Inn Road Chapel, London, 534.
Morton, Mr., farmer, East Flisk, 451.
Morven, Argyleshire, congregation from, in the "Floating Church," 656.
Mosley, Rev. Oswald, vicar of Birmingham, 534.
Moy, visit of a deputation to, 63; first Free Church service at, 110; parish of, 677; "Separatists" in, 679.
Muckhart, how the farmers of, were repaid for carting materials, 228.
Muir, John James, Esq., Glasgow, 461.
Muir, Mr. John, Glasgow, distinguished as a friend of Sabbath schools, 1871, 723.
Muirhead, of Cramond, Dr. George, signs the deed of demission, 97.
Muirkirk, the banner of the covenant, at, 282; post-Disruption labours at, 709.
Mull, island of, a site refused at Torosay in, 423; referred to, 1843-57, 664.
Munro, Rev. Dr., of Manchester, his church seized after litigation, 530.
Murray, Rev. Dr., U.S.A. ("*Kirwan*"), testimony from, 1843, 549.
Muthill, provision for worship in 1843 at, 214; how the Free Church was built at, 277; anecdote from, showing how conscience worked on the side of the Free Church, 165.

N

Nagpore, India, new mission opened at, 510.
Naples, 556.
Napier, Mr. James S., Glasgow, distinguished as a friend of Sabbath schools, 1879, 724.
Newburgh, anecdote of a woman of, 171.
New Zealand, post-Disruption movements in, 569.
Nice, 556.
Nicolson, Dr. Simon, Calcutta, his contribution in aid of the missionaries in India, 508.
Nicolson, Rev. Dr., of Ferry-port-on Craig, at Hobart Town, Tasmania, 568.
Nicolson, Alex., Esq., advocate, Sheriff of Kirkcudbright, Parliamentary report by, on Education in the Hebrides, 686.
Nisbet, Mr. James, London, publisher, referred to, 482; his active sympathy, 532.
Nixon, Rev. Mr., of Montrose, on Sabbath Observance, 1848, 716; preaching at Benholm, 1843, 770; on the revival movement, 1859, 774; his account of a religious awakening at Ferryden, 1860, 781-4.
Noble, Rev. Mr., of Blairingone, interdicted, 491.
Noel, Baptist, Hon. and Rev., London, 526; his active sympathy with the Disruption movement, 533-4.
North, Mr. Brownlow, at revival meetings in Scotland, 778.
Northumberland, statement by a minister in, 525.
Nova Scotia, Disruption in the Synod of, 562.

O

Oban, *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 653.
Ochiltree, Ayrshire, 457.
Ochiltree, reasons by a working-man of, for leaving the Establishment, 167.
Olrig, the people of, put their hands to the work of building, 270.
Old Meldrum, how a site was obtained at, 260.
Orchard, Dr., on injury to health by site-refusing, 446.
Orr, Rev. George, of Symington, is interdicted from holding a meeting in the Parish Church, 66.
Oxford, the Free Church Deputation at, 1843, 538-9; the vice-chancellor of, 539.
Oyne, provision for worship in 1843 at, 218.

P

Paible, North Uist, its people refused a site and oppressed by the factor, 416; Dr. Macintosh Mackay preaching at, from the door of a cart-shed, 416; its people meet under a rock, 416.
Paisley, strong support by its laity to Free Church principles in 1843, 461.
Panmure, Lord, refuses to tolerate on his estates any member or adherent of the Free Church, 265; his treatment of tenants at Lochlee, 453.
Parker, of Lesmahagow, Rev. A B., testimony to prevailing apathy on religious subjects, 160; his account of the effect of the Convocation on his people, 62; letter of his wife, 141; his last service in the Parish Church, 105; conducts worship in the fields, 223.

Parsons, Rev. Dr., 536.
Paterson, Rev. Dr. Nathaniel, of Glasgow, his anecdote of a minister's wife, 142; his first service to a Free Church congregation, 114; in the deputation to North of England, 527; at opening of a Free Church at Glenkens, 1845, 618.
Paterson, Rev. W., of Kirkurd, at Glenkens, 1845, 618.
Paul, Robert, Esq., banker, Edinburgh, reference to his biography, 459; speech at the Assembly, 1850, on heightened responsibilities, 625.
Peebles, how a site was obtained at, 257.
Peeblesshire, revival movements in, 1860, 775.
Peel, Right Hon. Sir Robert, his *dictum* regarding the subordination of the Church, 28.
Penicuik, how a site was obtained at, 261.
Perth, accommodation offered to the congregation of St. Leonards in 1843, 212; favourable weather in neighbourhood of, after the Disruption, 225.
Philpotts, Rev. Dr. Henry, Bishop of Exeter, his sympathy with the movement in Scotland, 1843, 533.
Piedmont, address from ministers of, 1843, 551.
Pinkerton, Rev. Mr., of Kilwinning, narrative by (regarding sites), 473.
Playfair, James, Esq., Glasgow, 461.
Pleasance Home Mission, Edinburgh, 738; revival movement at, 1860-61, 778.
Pomaret, Italy, grammar school at, 555.
Poolewe Parish Church preached vacant, 123.
Poonah, India, 503-5.
Portpatrick, difficulty of getting sand at, 259; the congregation at, remarkable case of, 478-9.
Princeton, U.S.A., testimony from its *Review*, 1844, 548.
Prochet, Signor, 1866, 555; his speech at the General Assembly, 1874, 556.
Proudfoot, of Culter, Rev. James, anecdote of, by Dr. Hanna, 100; his anticipation of the consequences of the Disruption, 383.
Prussia, the King of, his delegation to report about the Free Church movement, in 1843, 551.
Purves, Rev. Mr., of Jedburgh, interesting Disruption anecdote by, 758.

Q

Quothquan, Dumfriesshire, revival meetings at, 1860, 775.

R

Raffles, Rev. Dr., 536.
Rainy, Rev. Principal Robert, his recollections of Roseneath in 1843, 244; on Home Mission work, 646.
Rainy, Dr. Harry, Glasgow, 461.
Rannoch, an inclement Sabbath at, 227.
Rattray, Mr., of Brewlands, Glenisla, heritor, 589; how led to "go out" at the Disruption, 761-2.
Reay, Caithness, 677.
Reed, Rev. Dr. Andrew, 536.
Renwick, Rev. Mr., the well-known, referred to, 619.
Rescobie, effect of the Disruption at, 641.
Resolis Parish Church preached vacant, 125; resistance by the people at, 448; soldiers fire on the people there, 448; an old storehouse utilised for worship at, 657.
Revel, Dr., 1866, 555.
Rhynie, rapid erection of a wooden church at, 219.
Richmond, Duke of, his hostility to the Free Church, 364.
Riddell, Sir James, refuses a site at Strontian, 426.
Rigg, Mr., of Tarvit, Fifeshire, in 1843, his striking declaration for Free Church principles, 463; called "the Gaius of the Church," 464.
Rintoul, Rev. William, Canada, 561.
Ritchie, Dr. Charles, Glasgow, 461.
Robe, Rev. Mr., revival at Kilsyth under the ministry of, 8.
Robertson, Rev. John, of Gartly, his impressions of the Convocation, 54; efforts made to keep him in the Establishment, 385; his sacrifices in 1843, 391; anecdote of a woman of his congregation, 167; his comparative view of ministerial *status* before and after the Disruption, 603.
Robertson, Rev. James, of Ellon, moves a resolution regarding Dr. Welsh's protest, 173.
Rochdale, meeting at, 537.
Roden, The Earl of, his advocacy of the Free Church, 1843, 545.
Rogers, Rev. William, of Rescobie, referred to, 641.
Rolland, Adam, Esq. of Gask, 432.
Romanes, Rev. George, Canada, 561.
Rome, Waldensian Church in, 556.

Rosehall, Sutherlandshire, falling in of the roof of the Parish Church the Sabbath after the Disruption, 121.
Roslin, first Free Church sermon at, 108; accommodation of the minister of, in 1843, 177; difficulty in obtaining a site at, 257; favourable weather at, after the Disruption, 225; tent wantonly destroyed by visitors from Edinburgh, 353; communion roll purged at, 1844, 638.
Ross, Rev. Thomas, of Lochbroom, his reception of the news of the Disruption, 96; his taking leave of the Establishment, 104; his death in the manse, 140.
Ross, Mr., of Lessnessock, gives land for a glebe, 457.
Ross, Rev. Mr., of Rattray, preaches in Glenisla, 1843, 589.
Ross, Andrew, of Tongue, Sutherlandshire, one of "The Men," 672.
Rosskeen, revival there in 1841, 11; the Duke of Sutherland takes possession of schools built by Mr. Carment, 312.
Ross-shire, effects of the Disruption in, 651.
Rothesay, first Free Church service at, 118; a servant girl contributor at, 451; *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 659.
Roxburgh, Rev. Dr. John, his labours at Dundee, 15; on activity in Home Mission work, 646; on results of Home Mission work, 1859, 744-5; on revival movements, 1860, 774.
Rum, island of, its educational wants in 1852, 684.
Ruthwell, the farewell to the Establishment, 102; first Free Church service, 110; favourable weather after the Disruption, 225; accommodation for the minister in 1843, 186.

S

Sage, Rev. Mr., of Resolis, his congregation obliged to meet in an old storehouse, 657.
Salmond, Rev. Mr., of Paisley, called to Sydney, Australia, 567.
Saltcoats Church built on a triangular site, 284; *quoad sacra* Gaelic Church at, 489.
Schaffhausen, Canton of, address from ministers of, 1843, 551.
Sconser, Skye, preaching at, 1842, 659.
Seafield, the Earl of, refuses sites, 413.
Semple, Mr., of Glenkens, referred to, 619.
Shepherd, Capt., of Kirkville, his recommendation concerning the Sustentation Fund, 304.
Shepherd, Rev. Mr., his trials by open-air preaching, 415.
Sheshadri, Mr. Narayan, his "Bethel" at Jalna, 727.
Sheuchan, Wigtownshire, its *quoad sacra* Church, 489.
Shieldaig, Ross-shire, persecution of the minister of, by the laird, 180; preaching at, 1845, 660.
Shields, Rev. James, of Newry, 545.
Sievewright, Rev. J., of Markinch, his first sermon after the Disruption, 149.
Simpson, Dr. Robert, of Kintore, his first sermon to a Free Church congregation, 117.
Simson, Rev. Henry, of Chapel-Garioch, his privations for want of a suitable residence, 344.
Simson, Rev. David, of Oyne, his privations for want of a suitable residence, 344.
Simpson, Mr. Archibald, designs the principal Free Church in Aberdeen, 284.
Simpson, Sir James Y., Bart., 460.
Simpson, Rev. D., of Trinity *quoad sacra* Church, Aberdeen, interdicted, 490.
Simpson, Rev. Mr., from Brechin, ordained at Glenisla, 1850, 597; Disruption reminiscences by, 763.
Simpson, Professor, Edinburgh, distinguished as a friend of Sabbath schools, 1880, 724.
Sinclair, Mr. Dugald, a threatening factor, 454.
Sinclair, Sir George, Bart., on union with the "Original Seceders," 1852, 730; his statement as to effect of the Disruption in Highland parishes, 650-1.
Sinclair, Rev. Mr., of Lochalsh, at Torosay, 1857, 664.
Sinclair, Rev. Mr., appointed to Kenmore, 1846, 750.
Sinclair, Rev. Mr., of Huntly, incidents stated by, showing how strongly Disruption principles had impressed opponents, 755.
Skirling Parish Church preached vacant, 123.
Skye and Uist, sites refused by Lord Macdonald in, 415; crofters expelled for adhering to Free Church there, 416; the Free Presbytery of, ordain a missionary to St. Kilda, 1865, 699.

Skye, island of, religious movement throughout, 1842, 658; revival in 1843 in, 203; accommodation of the minister in 1843, 179.
Smailholm, attempt to prevent the holding of a meeting at, 65.
Snizort, Skye, a communion gathering at, 1863, 667; its Sabbath services on that occasion, 673-5.
Sommerville, Rev. Dr. J., of Drumelzier, signs the deed of demission, 97.
Southampton, 537.
Spalding, Mr., of Broomhall, Glenisla, heritor, 590.
Spence, Rev. Dr. Alex., of Aberdeen, his account of a meeting at Fintray, 73.
Spelvie, Loch, *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 653.
Sprague, Rev. Dr., U.S.A., testimony from, 548.
Spiers, Mr. Graham, Sheriff of Mid-Lothian, made convener of Sites Committee, 410; reference to biography of, 460; at Wanlockhead, 440; his promotion of the plan for a "Floating Church" on the West Coast, 655.
Stanley, unexpected accommodation found for the Free Church at, 215.
Stark, Rev. Mr., of Raasay, 653.
St. Cyrus, parish of, in 1843, 471.
Stevenston, first Free Church service at, 109; how a site was obtained at, 254; "the auld cock of," 282.
Stevenson, Nathaniel, Esq., Glasgow, 461.
Stevenson, James, Esq., 461; distinguished as a friend of Sabbath schools, 1872, 723.
Stewart, G. D., Esq. of Braco, Perthshire, his grant of sand to the people of Muthill, 279; grants sites, 457.
Stewart, Rev. James, of Aberdeen, his reasons for going out, 144.
Stewart, Rev. Dr. Robert Walter, his journey from Constantinople to be present at the Disruption, 88.
Stewart, Dr., Calcutta, 509.
Stewart, Mr. Patrick Maxwell, M.P., at London Wall Church, 531.
Stewart, Rev. Dr., of Erskine, his Evangelical labours in Italy, 554.
Stewart, Rev. Mr., of Kirkmichael, Glenisla, 589-92.
Stewart, Rev. Mr., of Sorn (afterwards of Liberton), 606.
Stewart, Rev. Mr., of Blair-Athole, 653.
Stewarton case, 43.
Stirling, Rev. Dr. M., of Cargill, rebuked by the Court of Session, 33; his first sermon after the Disruption, 213.
Stirling, seizure of the New North Church at, a peculiar case, 496.
St. George, the Count, 553.
St. Kilda, *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 653; how its people became prepared for the Disruption, 691-2; evangelical preaching welcomed there in 1822, 694; manse and church provided, and missionary ordained, 1830, 695; their Disruption difficulties, but unanimous adherence to the Free Church, 696-7; the proprietor yields, 1853, 698; Free Church endowment of the charge, and settlement of a new missionary, 699.
Stonefield, Mr. Campbell of, 454.
Stornoway, Lewis, *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 653; benefits there from the Disruption, 681.
Stranraer visited by the Rev. Samuel Martin in 1844, 375.
Strathbogie, craving for spiritual life, 162; desire for Gospel preaching there in 1843, 749; Free Church ministrations there, 753.
Strathaird, Skye, preaching at, 1842, 659.
Strathaven, its congregation ejected, 1843, 494.
Strathspey, petty persecution of the people of, 356; sites refused in, 413.
Straiton, Mr., of Kirkside, St. Cyrus, his generous letter and contribution to the Free Church in 1843, 471.
Strontian visited by Dr. Begg after the Disruption, 374; "Floating Church" at, 427; referred to, 655.
Stuart, Rev. Dr. A. Moody, on the magnitude of the Scripture principles involved in the testimony of the Free Church, 147.
Stuart, Moses, Rev. Prof., U.S.A., testimony from, 1843, 549.
Sunart, Loch, the "Floating Church" in, 655.
Sutherland, shepherds in a parish of, resist the attempt to bind them to the Establishment, 360; interesting case of a congregation in, 1843, 649-50; Moderatism in, 676.
Swan, Mr. P. D., Kirkcaldy, distinguished as a friend of Sabbath schools, 1873, 723.
Swanson, Rev. Mr., of Eig, his trials, 420.
Swanson, "Billy," story of, 421.
Sydow, Rev. Pastor, sent from Prussia, 1843, 551.

Sym, Rev. John, of Greyfriars, Edinburgh, farewell discourse by, 1843, 469; speech at the Assembly, 1852; on increased responsibilities, 624; on longings for a revival of religion, 765.
Symington, interdict on meeting in the Parish Church of, 66; provision for worship in 1843, 217; shocking death of one who had wished he never might hear the Free Church bell, 368 (note).
Syria, Sabbath-school contribution for Lebanon in, 1877, 727.

T

Tain, revival at, in 1840-41, 10; magistrates worship in the wooden church of, 221; the congregation at, 1845, 492-3.
Tanfield, Edinburgh, Hall of, Irish deputation at, 1843, 544; addresses from Continental Churches at, 1843, 551; Rev. F. Monod in, 1844, 552; Dr. Merle D'Aubigné, 1845, 552; deputation from the Protestant Church in France, 1848, 553; great variety of nationalities represented there, 553-4.
Tarbat, revival in 1840-41 at, 10.
Tarbert, the people meet during two winters in its graveyard, 454.
Tasker, Rev. William, of Edinburgh, introduces Mr. Simpson at the new Free Church in Glenisla, 1850, 597; appointed to the West Port Home Mission charge, Edinburgh, 737; his account of revival movement, 1860-61, 778.
Tasmania, reception of Disruption ministers in, 568.
Taylor, Rev. J. W., of Flisk, his early associations, 2; his impression of the Convocation, 56; opposes the expulsion of the *quoad sacra* ministers from the Presbytery of Linlithgow, 79-84; his induction at Flisk, and address to his parishioners, 153; his last sermon in the Parish Church, 101; watches for news of the first Free Assembly, 96; his leaving the manse, 133; rebuke addressed to him for having an over-tender conscience, 164; his testimony to the effects of the Disruption on his people, 202; anecdote of a ploughman, 203; his retrospect on the Disruption, 405; induction of, 470; reference to (footnote), 714; his experience of cases outside the Free Church in which spiritual fruit was due to the Disruption, 755-6; his account of revival movement, 1860-61, 776.
Taymouth, Lord Breadalbane's liberality at, 466.
Tharp, Lady Hannah, at Langton House in 1843, her liberal subscription for a manse at Kinneff, 458.
Thomson, Alex., Esq., of Banchory, commences the scheme for building manses, 347; his memoirs referred to, 462.
Thomson, Rev. James, of Muckhart, his view of the legal and constitutional aspects of the question, 148; his thoughts on impending Disruption, 58; his preparation for the Disruption, 18; his leaving the manse, 133; his opinions on the effects of the Disruption, 192-9.
Thomson, Rev. Dr. John, of Paisley, his anticipations at Yester of the Disruption, 384; his leaving the manse of Yester, 340; in deputation from Assembly of 1844, 636.
Thomson, Rev. John, of St. Ninians, Leith, on an attempt to prevent a meeting by fireworks, 233.
Thomson, Rev. Robert, of Peterculter, his death owing to his privations, 347.
Thomson, Rev. Charles, of Wick, his meeting with his people after the Convocation, 63.
Thomson, Rev. Dr. Andrew, effect of his preaching in Edinburgh before the Disruption period, 459.
Thomson, Rev. Mr., of Prestonkirk, his experience of post-Disruption advantages, 640.
Thornhill, how a site was obtained at, 262; foundation stone of a Free Church laid at, 1844, 636.
Thorburn, Rev. David, of Free South Leith Church, in Strathbogie, 1843, 704.
Tobermory, anecdote of a prayerful elder at, 194; Free Church built by the people's own hands, 271.
Tod, Mr. Thomas, Glencairn, farmer, 619.
Tongue, sufferings of the ministers of, after the Disruption, 182; a specimen of "The Men" in, 672.
Torosay, Mull, attempt to disturb a meeting at, 68; its people forced to meet on the shore below high-water mark, 424; the congregation at, 475; the Free Church congregation at, 1848-57, 664.

Torphichen, opening of the Free Church at, 286 ; the first place where a Free Church, manse, and school were completed, 338.
Torryburn, provision for worship in 1843 at, 215.
Traill, Miss Ann, gives a church at Papa Westra, 269.
Trumisgarry, North Uist, hardships of Rev. Norman Macleod at, 419.
Tweeddale, the Marquis of, his kindness to Dr. Thomson, of Yester, 340, 384.
Tweedie, Rev. Dr., his report as to "success of English Deputations," 1844, 543.

U

Uist, South, education promoted in, 685 ; the Glasgow "Ladies' Association's" work there, 688 ; the locality described, 689 ; reference to, 697.
Uist, North, reference to, 697.
Ulva, island of, *The Breadalbane* schooner at, 653.
Unst, Shetland Islands, interdict delivered at,—large numbers of adherents there, 458 ; their tent blown away by a storm, 459.
Urquhart, Rev. Mr., of Portpatrick, 478-9.
Utrecht, address from Christian communities in, 1843, 551.
Uyasound, Shetland Islands, church erected at, 459.

V

Vaud, Canton de, the Disruption in its Church, 1845, and Free Church sympathy with, 553 ; Sabbath school contributions for, 727.

W

Walker, Mr. John, a teacher, expelled, 453-4.
Walker, John Lyon, Esq., 461.
Walker, Rev. Dr., of Carnwath, his account of revival movement there, 1860, 775.
Wallace, Rev. John A., of Hawick, his appeal to his people on the eve of the Disruption, 196 ; his retrospect on the Disruption, 196.
Wallace, Mrs., a female teacher, expelled, 454.
Wanlockhead, revival in 1841 at, 12 ; description of, 437 ; site refused at, 438 ; the miners' petition, 438 ; the cold of, 439 ; tent at, 441 ; its cottage services, 442 ; trials patiently borne by its people, 443.
Watt, Rev. Mr., Glenisla, refuses his pulpit to Mr. M'Cheyne, 584.
Watt, Mr. Robert, Airdrie, distinguished as a friend of Sabbath schools, 1876, 724.
Watten Parish Church preached vacant, 125.
Webster, Mr., farmer, Ballandro, in Benholm, provides Mr. Glen with a house rent-free, 1843, 768.
Weir, Mr. James, precentor at Wanlockhead, 441.
Weir, Hugh, Esq. of Kirkhall, a member of the Established Church, his remark as to the ejection of the Saltcoats Gaelic congregation, 489.
Welsh, Rev. Dr. David, his forefathers, 1 ; his sermon on the day of the Disruption, 89 ; reads the Protest at the Disruption, 90 ; his prayer at the opening of the Free Assembly, 95 ; his letter announcing that £19,000 had been subscribed for the New College, 333 ; advocates an Education scheme, 311 ; effect of his influence as a professor, before the Disruption period, 459 ; his zeal for religious supply to the Colonies, 560.
Wells, Rev. J., home-mission work in Glasgow, 743.
West Port Home-Mission, Edinburgh, 736 ; a revival movement there, 1860-61, 778.
Westruther, difficulties thrown in the way by the heritors to the building of a Free Church at, 274 ; how sand was obtained, 276.
White, Rev. Mr., of Airlie, preaches in Glenisla, 1843, 589.
"White John" ("Ian Bean"), Highland catechist, Ross-shire, his statement as to a revival there, 660.
White, Mr. James, Overtoun, distinguished as a friend of Sabbath schools, 1881, 724.
White, Rev. Mr., Haddington, at the Union of the "Original Seceders" with the Free Church, 1852, 731.
Whyte, William, Esq., Bookseller, Cowgate-head Home-Mission Church built by the Trustees of, 739.
Wigton, visited by the Rev. Samuel Martin in 1844, 375.
Wilson, Rev. Dr. William, of Dundee, his narrative of the trials of the people of Carmylie in obtaining a

site, 263; his sacrifices there at the Disruption, 179; on results of Home Mission work, 1865, 745; Disruption reminiscences by, 762; in a deputation at Benholm, 1842, 766.
Wilson, James, Esq. of Woodville, Edinburgh, reference to his biography, 459.
Wilson, John, Esq., Glasgow, 461.
Wilson, Rev. Dr. John, of Bombay, 501; his adherence to the Free Church, 503; letter from, 509.
Wilson, Rev. Mr., Vicar of Southampton, 534.
Will, Rev. Mr., at Dunedin, N.Z., 570.
Willis, Rev. Dr., Principal, Toronto, 564-65.
Wingate, Rev. W., missionary in Pesth, 502.
Wood, Rev. Walter, of Westruther (afterwards of Elie), his visit to Cairnie, in Strathbogie, 36; his second visit, when he breaks the interdict, 39; dispenses the Lord's Supper there, 41; his visit to South Dumfriesshire with Mr. Jollie, 68; his address to the parishioners of Westruther, 154; his narrative of the building of the Free Church there, 274; how encouraged in preaching after the Disruption, 748; incident in his experience as to spiritual fruit from the Disruption, 756-7; preaching at Dryfesdale, 1843, 758.
Wood, Dr. James, 460.
Wood, J. G., Esq., W.S., 460.
Wood, Rev. Dr. Julius, 538.
Woodside, Aberdeen, the congregation adhere to the Resolutions of the Convocation, 62; provision for worship in 1843, 219; the farewell to the Establishment, 103; the first Free Church service, 112-13; collectors for the Free Church threatened, 354; effect of evangelistic deputation at, 1844, 639.
Wright, John, Esq., 461.
Wynd Church, Glasgow, a revival movement at, 1860-61, 779.

Y

Yester, the people of, erect a tent, 229.
Young, Mr., gives a church at Burntisland, 269.

Z

Zealand, address from Christian communities in, 1843, 551.

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